Characters

SETTING

The action of the play takes place in New York City's criminal justice system, largely in the yard of a special twenty-three-hour lockdown wing of protective custody on Rikers Island.

- Angel Cruz, thirty years old, Latino
- Valdez, thirties to forties, Prison Guard
- Mary Jane Hanrahan, thirties, white, Public Defender
- Charlie D'Amico, thirties, Italian-American, Prison Guard
- Lucius Jenkins, forties, African-American

Act 1

Act 1, Scene 1

ACT 1: Scene 1

Manhattan Correctional Center, "The Tombs." Darkness.
Late night. Angel Cruz, alone, tries to pray.

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father, who art in heaven, Howard be thy name. Howard? How art? How? How-now? Fuck! Mothahfuckah … fuckin'. "Our Father, who aren't in heaven" … who aren't? Fuck! who — "Our Father who art

(who art!!)

, Our Father who art in Heaven, how-, how-, how-, howl-ed, how-led, howling, howl, howl, Thurston Howell, fuckin', fuckin', shit!

INMATE #1

Shut the fuck up!!!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father who art in heaven, how-, how-, how-, *fuck,* how-, how-, how-, *goddamn it,* how-, how-, how …

INMATE #1

"How, how, how" my ass, mothahfuckah! Niggahs tryin' to sleep up in this mothahfuckah!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father —"

INMATE #1

Shut the fuck up!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father —"

INMATE #1

Shut the fuck up!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father —"

INMATE #1

Shut the fuckety-fuck up!

ANGEL CRUZ

You shut the fuckety-fuck up!

INMATE #1

You shut the fuckety-fuck up!

INMATE #2

Both a y'all, shut the fuck up!

INMATE #1

(To #2)

Who you tellin', "shut the fuck up"? *You* shut the fuck up!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father —"

INMATE #2

(To #1)

I know you ain't tellin' me shut the fuck up!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father —"

INMATE #1

(To #2)

I'm tellin' you and that prayin' niggah shut the fuck up!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our father who art in heaven —"

INMATE #2

(To #1)

Don't tell me shut the fuck up!

INMATE #1

(To #2)

Shut the fuck up!

INMATE #2

(To #1)

You shut the fuck up.

INMATE #3

All y'all niggas best shut the fuck up!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our father who art in heaven —"

INMATES #1, 2, & 3

Shut the fuck up!

ANGEL CRUZ

Hal — Hal-hallowed! *Hallowed* be thy name!

INMATE #3

We'll see you up at Rikers, mothahfuckah!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Thy Kings will come —"

INMATE #1

Shut the fuck up!

ANGEL CRUZ

You shut the fuck up!

INMATE #1

Shut the fuckety-fuck up!

INMATE #2

We gonna kill you, Cruz!

ANGEL CRUZ

I'll kill all a y'all! I'll kill all a y'all little bitches!

(A GUARD *enters, club in hand.)*

GUARD

Hey! What's goin' on in here?

INMATE #1

Crip out.

INMATE #2

Crip out.

ANGEL CRUZ

Whatch'all tryin' ta say? You Crips? Fuck the Crips!

GUARD

Hey!

ANGEL CRUZ

Fuck Crips!

GUARD

Cruz, since this is your first night with us —

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father, who art in heaven —"

GUARD

Hey!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father, who — who — who …

GUARD

Cruz!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father —"

GUARD

Shut the fuck up!

ANGEL CRUZ

Fuck you!

GUARD

What?

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father —"

GUARD

Fuck me?!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Our Father who art in heaven —"

GUARD

Fuck me?!

ANGEL CRUZ

"Hallowed be thy name, Hallowed be thy name —"

(The GUARD *enters* ANGEL's *cell.)*

GUARD

Did you just say "Fuck me"?!

(Lights crossfade.)

VALDEZ

I know an ex-con who did seven years for murdering a nice hot dog vendor. He slept soundly every night, undisturbed by his conscience. He now lives at Gun Hill Road in the Bronx, so beware if you happen to be around that area. He has no regard for human life, including his own. I would like to take his late-model Sport Utility Vehicle and drive it through his front door, accelerate past his bathroom, and come to a violent,

crashing halt right on top of his head, but the law prohibits me. Instead, I simply wish that he dies soon and painfully.

Whenevah I see him, I say, "I wish you die soon and painfully." Before I became a corrections officer, I worked for the Department of Sanitation hauling garbage. It used to amaze me, the valuable items people would cavalierly discard. It angered me. Couches, alarm clock radios, family photos. I often wanted to go to people's apartments and throttle them. One time I saw a guy throw out a very nice color television set. I asked him if it still worked. He said yes. I asked him why he didn't just give it away instead of trashing it. He smirked at me. I slapped him. People think everything is replaceable. Everything is not replaceable. People believe they go through life accumulating things. That is incorrect. People go through life discarding things, tangible and intangible, replaceable and priceless. What people do not understand is that once they have discarded an irreplaceable item, it is lost forever …

Act 1, Scene 2

Scene 2

Manhattan Correctional Center, legal consultations room. Mary Jane and Angel (beaten up) midstream.

ANGEL CRUZ

What I want is a fuckin' lawyer! Is it possible, in this night-mare — I mean, what the fuck is this? — Even on TV they get a lawyer —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I am a lawyer, I'm your lawyer —

ANGEL CRUZ

I wanna real lawyer!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I am a real lawyer, and you are my real client.

ANGEL CRUZ

Fuck that!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You wanna see the paperwork?

ANGEL CRUZ

Fuck the paperwork! Why didn't you check the paperwork before you came in here talkin' all kinda shit when you didn't even know who you was speakin' to?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Look, I am sorry for the mix-up, I —

ANGEL CRUZ

The "mix-up"? Is that what just happened before? We had a little "mix-up"?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I said —

ANGEL CRUZ

Do you always have these little mix-ups? Or do you just never know who anybody is?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I'm sorry!

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't Hector Villanueva!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I know that.

ANGEL CRUZ

Hector Villanueva: *No aqui!*

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Okay, what I need from you —

ANGEL CRUZ

Need? You gonna sit there and talk to me about what *you* need? I'm incarcerated, lady! Why can't we talk about what I fuckin' need?!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

What do you need?

ANGEL CRUZ

I need a damn lawyer!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Which is why I'm here —

ANGEL CRUZ

This is bullshit! This is racism is what it is, racism! If I was white, I'd have mothahfuckin' Perry Mason sittin' here wit' the little glasses and the beard talkin' fuckin' strategy. Instead they give me some bumblin'-ass Wilma Flintstone don't even know who I am!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You're Angel Cruz, you're thirty years old, you live with your mom on Tiemen Place, West Harlem. You have one felony prior, a robbery, you were sixteen. You work as a bike messenger. You had a year of college, you played soccer —

ANGEL CRUZ

I never played soccer!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You're charged with attempted murder, I know that.

ANGEL CRUZ

Attempted murder?!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

That surprises you?

ANGEL CRUZ

Ya see, bitch? Dass exactly what I'm talkin' bout! All I did —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Stop!

ANGEL CRUZ

All I did was shoot him in the ass. What the fuck is "attempted murder" about that, huh?! Stupid ass!

(MARY JANE *rises, begins collecting her things.)*

ANGEL CRUZ

What are you doing?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I'm leaving.

ANGEL CRUZ

Why, 'cuz I called you a bitch?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

No, because you just confessed to me.

ANGEL CRUZ

Confessed? Confessed what?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You just admitted to me that you did the shooting.

ANGEL CRUZ

No I didn't!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You just said, "All I did was shoot him in the ass."

ANGEL CRUZ

So?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

So now you get your wish: I can't adequately defend you now, so you'll get another lawyer.

ANGEL CRUZ

What if I don't want another lawyer?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You just got through haranguing me —

ANGEL CRUZ

"Haranguing"?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Haranguing: it means —

ANGEL CRUZ

I know what the fuck it means. Whaddya think? I'm a Puerto Rican, therefore I'm a mothahfuckah who can't know shit?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Yeah, that's exactly what I was thinking —

ANGEL CRUZ

I know a lot a fuckin' shit!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Well then, know this: When the next lawyer walks in here, tomorrow, or the day after, try not to *confess* to him —

ANGEL CRUZ

Tomorrow?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Because when you confess to your lawyer. Angel, it means we can't put you on the witness stand —

ANGEL CRUZ

Hold up —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Because if we did put you on the witness stand, we would be suborning perjury and I'm sure, of course, that you know what "suborning" means, but on the off chance you might've missed that vocabulary word during your high school years at Power Memorial, let me refresh you: it means if you're lying up there, we can't know about it —

ANGEL CRUZ

Okay.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

And if we do know about it, we're obligated to inform the court.

ANGEL CRUZ

So —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

And if we don't inform the court and someone finds out about it, then we get in a lot of trouble!

ANGEL CRUZ

If you had toal me this shit before —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

And another thing: If a public defender confuses you with someone else, it might be because they have dozens of other cases and they made an honest mistake! This is the criminal justice system you're in now. Mix-ups happen here!

ANGEL CRUZ

So whatchu gonna do about it?!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

What am *I* gonna do?

ANGEL CRUZ

'Cuz I ain't got till tomorrow —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Let me give you a little tip: The trick, Angel, is not to have a lawyer who makes no mistakes, but to get the lawyer who A) makes the least mistakes, and B) is either green

enough or masochistic enough to actually give a shit about their clients.
ANGEL CRUZ

So which one are you?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I'm neither.

(MARY JANE *exits.)*

Act 1, Scene 3

Scene 3

The yard. Protective custody, Rikers Island. Lucius Jenkins, an older inmate, is in an outdoor cage burning through the end of a vigorous workout. D'Amico rises from his seated post.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Still workin' out, huh, Lou?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Feelin' good, Brother Charlie, in fine feather! How'm I looking?

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Lookin' good, Lou.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Ever tell you I was a champion swimmer and springboard diver in high school?

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Were ya?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Back in the day, brother, back in the day. Olympic caliber. Got a cigarette for me, brother?

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Sure thing, Lou.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Gimme another one for behind my ear … The Lord loves ya, Charlie.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Thanks, Lou …

LUCIUS JENKINS

Dig that sun, Charlie.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Yup.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Sun shines on me, sun shines on you.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Yup.

LUCIUS JENKINS

It ain't sunnier over there by you, is it?

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Nope.

LUCIUS JENKINS

You got dat right. Praise be!

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Could I ax you sumtin', Lou?

LUCIUS JENKINS

You ain't messin' up again, are ya brother?

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Nah, it's just, I heard you turned down an interview, some kinda life story on Court TV?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Television's the number-one narcotic we got going on up here in America! Keeps a man idle and stupid. Might as well pump heroin into the airstream. Same difference … TV! Ha! "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" "Who Wants to Kiss My Narrow Black Ass?" I'd say that's a lot more like it. And that's pretty much what I told them TV folks.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Yeah, well, my wife's a little disappointed, thought I might get a little screen time, somethin' to tell the relatives.

LUCIUS JENKINS

You did thank her for that fine shepherd's pie she made me?

CHARLIE D'AMICO

I did.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Tell her sorry 'bout the interview, Lucius don't do no TV … unless, of course, they bring that Connie Chung up in here, kinda like her, Lord forgive me … Say, Charlie, about them Oreo cookies —

CHARLIE D'AMICO

You didn't see them? I left them in your cell.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Yeah, brother, I found them all right, and God Bless Ya for it, but the thing is, they got these *other* kinda Oreos —

CHARLIE D'AMICO

What kind?

LUCIUS JENKINS

They got this kind that's dipped in fudge, that's the kind I was talkin' about the other day.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

I'm sorry, Lucius, I didn't realize —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Quite all right, brother, quite all right. Now here's the thing: these fudged-dipped little concoctions, they come in chocolate fudge and vanilla fudge —

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Chocolate and vanilla.

LUCIUS JENKINS

I like the vanilla fudge, that is to say, The Vanilla Fudge, that's where my preference lies, if ya get my meaning.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Not a problem, Lou. I'll juss tell my wife; she'll be happy to do it.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Your wife's a fine woman, Charlie.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

I know.

LUCIUS JENKINS

But then again, why wouldn't she be, since you such a fine gentleman yourself.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Thanks, Lou.

LUCIUS JENKINS

And I mean that sincerely.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Me too.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Praise be. So whatchu think, Charlie? I'm a beat extradition?

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Sure, Lou. Why not.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Juss like you gonna beat what needs beatin', right?

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Damn straight, Lou.

LUCIUS JENKINS

"We all gonna beat … what needs to be beat … so we can snatch vict'ry … from the jaws of defeat"!

CHARLIE D'AMICO

I like that. Who said it?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Your mother.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

What?

LUCIUS JENKINS

I said it, Charlie, juss made it up now.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Oh.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Gotta stay wit me, baby —

CHARLIE D'AMICO

I'm here Lou —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Sharp minds think alike.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

"Sharp minds, Sharp products."

LUCIUS JENKINS

What's that?

CHARLIE D'AMICO

You never heard that before?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Nah, man.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Really?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Who in the world said that?

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Your grandma.

LUCIUS JENKINS

My …? Oh now, Charlie, you are a wicked, sinful man —

CHARLIE D'AMICO

That I am.

LUCIUS JENKINS

If my ol' granny were here now she'd flatten you like a thin-crust pizza, you could believe that!

(VALDEZ *enters, eating from a box of Oreos.)*

VALDEZ

Officer D'Amico! Superintendent Callahan wants to see you in his office.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

What for?

VALDEZ

I'm afraid I am not privy to that information.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

All right, let me just secure the prisoner back to his cell —

VALDEZ

He wants to see you now.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Like, right this second?

VALDEZ

Pronto. His words, not mine.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Okay. Uh — -

VALDEZ

I'll secure the prisoner.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Do you know how to do it?

VALDEZ

Do I know how to do it? Yes, I think I do.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Lucius doesn't give us much of a problem —

VALDEZ

I'm sure he won't.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Okay then.

(D'AMICO *exits.)*

LUCIUS JENKINS

Didn't catch your name.

VALDEZ

Valdez.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Valdez?

VALDEZ

Correct.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Fine day today, huh Valdez?

VALDEZ

Splendid. Step away from the cage.

LUCIUS JENKINS

You don't mind if I linger a little, do ya, brother?

VALDEZ

Linger?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Enjoy a few more minutes of this heaven-sent autumn breeze, just, you know, till Charlie gets back?

VALDEZ

"Charlie" will not be returning.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Gone for the day?

VALDEZ

Gone. Step away from the cage.

LUCIUS JENKINS

You a churchgoin' man?

VALDEZ

I worship the devil. Away from the cage.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Thing is, I'd really prefer —

VALDEZ

You'd prefer?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Just a coupla more minutes, put my thoughts in order —

VALDEZ

When you're back in your cell, you're gonna have all the time you need for reflection. Last time: Step away.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Yeah, I see your point, big man, I do indeed. Thing is, up here in P˙C˙, up here, it's a little different than downstairs. We gotta different kinda vibe going on —

VALDEZ

"Vibe"?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Yeah, brother man, it's a different kinda feel —

VALDEZ

"Feel"?

VALDEZ

Works out nicely for everybody.

VALDEZ

Oh … well let me, if I may, tell you now about *my* vibe, *my* feel. My "vibe" is: Step away from that cage before I come in there and club you to death.

LUCIUS JENKINS

'Nuff said, brother, 'nuff said.

(LUCIUS *assumes the position.* VALDEZ *enters the cage, cuffs him.)*

VALDEZ

Nah, nah, I juss told you about my vibe. Now lemme tell you about my "feel." Now stand up. Thank you. My "feel" is this:

(VALDEZ *spits in his face.)*

VALDEZ

Thass my feel. It's a "different kinda feel," I know, but it's *my* feel. And if you gotta problem with my feel, then you are gonna get a taste of my vibe. Are we clear on the "Vibe and Feel" thing now?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Affirmative.

VALDEZ

This is not Jellystone Park. I am not the Park Ranger. There will be no more Oreo cookies in your picnic basket. There will be no more picnic. Got that, Superstar? I do not like infractions. There will be no more infractions. At this moment, I give you zero respect because that's where your balance stands. Zero … That's why I can spit in your face. That's why I am currently eyeballing you in an aggressive manner, eating your cookies. That's why I can tell you that in my mind, you're a worthless psychopathic piece of shit, a scrawny old H˙I˙V˙ faggot, a skin-poppin' ugly, gangly bag of bones — an eyesore. "Black Plague": That's what they call you, right? "Cuz you black and you killed a lot a mothahfuckahs"? I heard you give out autographs.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Prayer cards.

VALDEZ

You think you some kind a superstar, Mr˙ Superstar?

LUCIUS JENKINS

I'm a God-fearing man.

VALDEZ

Don't be a God-fearing man, be a Valdez-fearing man. I heard they wanna put you on TV; lemme tell you something about that: I enjoy TV. I would go so far as to say that I love TV. I gotta big-screen TV in my den, I watch it often with popcorn and Pepsi. If I ever see you on the TV being a superstar, it will upset me. And if that happens, I'm gonna come back to work here the next day and I'm gonna do a little "Vibe and Feel" on your ass. Understood?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Yeah, man.

VALDEZ

Say, "Affirmative." Say it!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Affirmative.

VALDEZ

Goddamn right, Superstar. If you do not fuck with me, Mr˙ Superstar, I can guarantee you a garden-variety miserable existence. But if you do decide to fuck with me — ever — I will show you a world where mere misery is like toasting marshmallows 'round the campfire in your long johns. You get me, Superstar?

LUCIUS JENKINS

The Lord will provide.

VALDEZ

Excuse me?

LUCIUS JENKINS

I mean, "Affirmative."

VALDEZ

I don't give a fuck what you mean. When they extradite your ass to Florida, you can resume your shenanigans. Until

then, believe this: If you ever try to wave a Bible in my face, I'll shove it right through your teeth. And don't you ever ask me for no cigarette, 'cuz I don't smoke. Move it out!

Act 1, Scene 4

Scene 4

Mary Jane speaks

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

When I was fifteen, there was this father/daughter dance at the elite private girls' school in Manhattan that I went to as a charity case-slash-financial aid recipient. My mother had wisely arranged for her brother, Uncle Mikey, to take me to the dance, but at the last minute, my father decided that him not escorting me himself might be one of those things that might scar me in later life — so me and my father left our two-family house in Sunnyside that evening; me in a dress my parents couldn't afford, and my dad in his Irish all-purpose navy blue suit with a pair of black socks we had convinced him to borrow from the neighbors. When we got inside the ballroom, I took a quick look around and became instantly embarrassed to the point of humiliation by the fact that my dad was the only father on the Upper East Side that night whose suit pants didn't have cuffs. But within an hour, everyone was calling him "Danny," even the headmistress, who hadn't called me anything but "Miss Hanrahan" in three years. And he was dancing, and chatting; he had even stuck by the agreed-upon

two-beer rule, or so I thought … At some point in the evening, one of the other fathers made an offhand comment that my father took exception to; a heated discussion ensued, and my father ended up stabbing the guy with a dessert fork, breaking the skin. What the guy had said was unimportant; actually, what he said was, he was reminiscing about where he had grown up as a kid and he remarked that "It used to be a good neighborhood, you know, white, now, forget it, I went back there last month, it's half white, the rest: blacks and Italians." My mom's Italian.

EMS was called, and the dance? Well, let's just say the stabbing concluded the dancing portion of the evening … My father's justification for the assault, after explaining how he didn't *immediately* attack him, and how he had given the "rich jerk" ample opportunity to apologize, and how he won't tolerate a bigot no matter where he is, and "What if your mom or 'Rasheed from the Deli' had been there?" and how he still doesn't understand why I need to go to that stuck-up school anyway. In the end, what he finally said was "It was just a fork." And he said it, I've now come to realize, with just that same look of incredulousness on his face that Angel Cruz had on his … as if the whole world was crazy and he was the only sane one. I hated my dad for the whole mortifying incident, but the dysfunctional side of me was proud of him — actually I'm still kind of proud of him — and I'm not convinced that there's something wrong with me for feeling that. I had no idea why Angel Cruz had "just shot him in the ass" but I felt something — something — and I needed to know what it was. And even though I was no longer obligated to him as his counsel, and despite the fact that the rational side of my brain was very much convinced that he had, in fact, attempted to murder Reverend Kim, and, yes, of course, even if he hadn't literally attempted murder, you still can't run around shooting people just like you can't go around stabbing people with dessert forks, I know all that, but I gotta admit that somewhere inside of me, and I don't know if it's the good side, or the side that I saw a therapist twice a week and went to ACOA meetings for, but somewhere inside of me is a place that believes that sometimes you *can* do those things, or at least, *somebody* can, or *should,* and that one man's neurotic is another man's hero, and who, ultimately, can say which one's which with any real certainty at all?

Act 1, Scene 5

Scene 5

The yard. Protective custody, Rikers Island. Lucius Jenkins is in his outdoor cage jogging furiously in place.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Lord I believe, aid thou my disbelief! Lord I believe, aid thou my disbelief! Devil get thee gone, Devil go away! Usurp the Serpent, Lord, he crawlin' up my leg! Irrigate the Bile, Lord, ketchin' in my neck! Take away the vengeance, Lord, swirlin' in my vein! Lobotomize the evil, Lord, slinkin', in my brain! Can't go back, can't go back, can't go back, can't go back! Watch me kick my knees up to Heaven: 12345678910! 12345678910! Through the Grace, I jog in place, where once was sloth, now I'm cookin' broth! Cookin' broth, Jesus, Check the recipe!: Old Testament Backwards!: "Malachi, Zechariah, Haggai, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Nahum, Micah, Jonah, Obadiah, Amos, Joel, Hosea, Daniel, Ezekiel, Lamentations, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Song a Songs, Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, Psalms, Job, Esther, Nehemiah, Ezra, Chronicles 2, Chronicles 1, Kings 2, Kings 1, Samuel 2, Samuel 1, Ruth, Judges, Joshua, Deuteronomy, Numbers, Leviticus, Exodus, and Genesis mothahfuckah" — pardon my French! Make me a mustard seed, Jesus! Hold the damn mayo, gimme the mustard!! Ain't talkin' 'bout ketchup, I wants the mustard. Don't relish the relish, don't need ta embellish, ain't tryin' ta get it on — juss pass 'the Grey Poupon! You like that one, Jesus? Gonna drop and give ya twenty, Baby! Watch me now … "one two three four, cuz I love you Lord, I'll do some more"

(ya watchin'?)

"eight nine ten eleven, endure the pain, get ta heaven"

(observe the rigid form)

"fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eight, get me saved before my date"! Up and Adam, Adam and Eve … Miles to go, Miles to go! "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few"!! "Harvest: plentiful, workers: few!" I'll work hard, I'll produce a fine harvest! Gimme sumpthin' ta work with, and we'll transform misery into ministry, make a prison a palace. "Lord make me an instrument of thy peace." Thy will be done! Deliver me from evil, Lord,

Thy will be done! Deliver me from me, Lord, Deliver me from *me!*
VALDEZ

Time!

LUCIUS JENKINS

I'll sprint for ya, *faster,* I'll sprint to Valhalla and back, *faster* …

VALDEZ

Time's up!

LUCIUS JENKINS

(To VALDEZ)

No it ain't! Sprint to Golgotha two times, *faster* —

VALDEZ

Away from the cage, Jenkins!

VALDEZ

To Florida or the Promise Land, faster —

VALDEZ

Cease now!

LUCIUS JENKINS

(To VALDEZ)

Time ain't up, check your Timex! Ridin' with ya —

VALDEZ

You want a fuckin' war?

(LUCIUS *stops, assumes the position,* VALDEZ *enters.)*

VALDEZ

I could dismantle that camera, assault you into a coma, and suffer no penalty! In fact, I would prolly be applauded … This little charade you're playin', this communication with God: It's a farce!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Well now —

VALDEZ

Sheer folly.

LUCIUS JENKINS

You believe in God, Valdez?

VALDEZ

I believe you are about one more syllable out your mouth from death, mothahfuckah.

LUCIUS JENKINS

I —

VALDEZ

No more God out here in the Yard.

LUCIUS JENKINS

What?

VALDEZ

Do you need me to correct your hearing problem?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Do you know who I am?!

VALDEZ

Do *you?*

LUCIUS JENKINS

I got rights! It's in the Constitution!

VALDEZ

What, you didn't hear of the latest judicial ruling? The Supreme Court ruled in the case of "Valdez versus The Skinny Black Faggot" that the separation of Church and State can only be superseded upon the separation of the Skinny Black Faggot's limbs from his withered torso. In other words, I am the Constitution. And you, you're a Skinny Black Faggot. Questions? Comments?

(looking up)

"God"? Do You beg to differ?!

(To LUCIUS)

Whoa! Wait a second, Mr˙ Superduperstar: do I detect a droplet of rage somewhere behind those Con Man's eyes? Silence? I like that. Thass promising. Some people call this place the V˙I˙P˙ Lounge, that is inaccurate. You are here not because you are a V˙I˙P˙, you are here because the rest of the livestock downstairs wishes to cannibalize you. You are livestock in storage and I am a cowboy currently in charge of just one cow. Check your ass when you get back to your cell: It says: "Valdez, property of." God hates you.

Act 1, Scene 6

Scene 6

Manhattan Correctional Center: legal consultations room. Angel alone, more beaten up. Mary Jane enters, tentatively.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Hello, Angel —

ANGEL CRUZ

What are you doing here?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Came to check in on you.

ANGEL CRUZ

Check in on me?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You don't look so good.

ANGEL CRUZ

The fuck you care?!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Angel —

ANGEL CRUZ

Yo, I gotta visitor coming, so —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I didn't see anyone else's name in the log book —

ANGEL CRUZ

Log book?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

When I signed in —

ANGEL CRUZ

They prolly ain't here yet.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Do you know who's coming?

ANGEL CRUZ

Not exactly. Somebody.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Regular visiting hours are, uh, over.

ANGEL CRUZ

Over?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Yeah.

ANGEL CRUZ

Oh.

(Pause)

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Angel, I'm sorry about yesterday.

ANGEL CRUZ

What?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I said —

ANGEL CRUZ

What time did visiting hours end?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

About a half hour ago.

ANGEL CRUZ

Was there people down there when you came in?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Yeah.

ANGEL CRUZ

So people could be down there, but maybe they don't get in?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

It happens a lot.

ANGEL CRUZ

Did you, was there any white guys down there?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Umm.

ANGEL CRUZ

Like a guy my age with, like, black hair, curly, kinda look like me but white? Maybe he was wit' some Chinese-lookin' people, Korean?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I don't think I saw anyone who looked like that, but —

ANGEL CRUZ

No big deal.

(Pause)

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I could check downstairs —

ANGEL CRUZ

Yo, is there sumpthin' that you want?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I, uh, I brought some food —

ANGEL CRUZ

Food?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I got some chicken, potato pancakes, coleslaw, I also got some Ring Dings in here someplace and some donuts —

ANGEL CRUZ

You didn't bring no deviled eggs?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Deviled eggs?

ANGEL CRUZ

Some deviled eggs and a little blanket, we could have a fuckin' picnic —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Angel —

ANGEL CRUZ

And we could invite some nice guests! Who you wanna invite?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I'm just —

ANGEL CRUZ

Tell you what: I'll invite *my* lawyer, and you could invite fuckin' "Hector Villanueva," and we'll party, 'cuz thass what this is, right? A fuckin' party? Let's … let's go get some "opera music" and some Popsicle sticks and go see the fuckin' Shakespeare in the Park —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I could leave if you want.

ANGEL CRUZ

Who's stoppin' you?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

But then they'd just return you to your cell.

ANGEL CRUZ

Return me to my … Did you juss fuckin' threaten me?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Did you shoot Reverend Kim with the intention of killing him?

ANGEL CRUZ

Are you makin' fuckin' threats?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You went there to kill him, didn't you?

ANGEL CRUZ

You ain't my lawyer no more.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I know that —

ANGEL CRUZ

I got another lawyer now, much better than you. Got a beard and everything.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I know.

ANGEL CRUZ

Little half glasses, whaddya call them, bifocals? Nice suit, Smart. Langdon Brown!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I know Langdon.

ANGEL CRUZ

Dass right! Man's even writin' a screenplay! You ever write a fuckin' screenplay?!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I'm too busy practicing law to write screenplays.

ANGEL CRUZ

Yeah well, Langdon Brown, he don't need ta practice, he already got that shit down!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Yeah, well …

ANGEL CRUZ

He toal me all about you too! Toal me I could sue you if I wanted, make a complaint. Dass why you brought me chicken, right?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I brought you —

ANGEL CRUZ

'Cuz if you wanted to bribe me, you shoulda brought me steak!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

This —

ANGEL CRUZ

Big ol' steak, with a pair a Nunchucks —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I'm —

ANGEL CRUZ

Chainsaw inside the baked potato — Where you goin'?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Like I said —

ANGEL CRUZ

You're a fuckin' bitch, you know that?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I wish you all the best —

ANGEL CRUZ

I don't need your wishes or your "sorrys" or your chickens or your anything! I don't need anything!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Angel —

ANGEL CRUZ

Get the fuck outta here! Go on! Get out!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Did you shoot Reverend Kim with the intention of killing him?

ANGEL CRUZ

I shot Reverend Kim in the ass with the intent to bust a cap in his lyin', bullshittin' ass!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I don't believe that for a second!

ANGEL CRUZ

I doan give a shit what you believe!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

What really happened? Were you ready to do it, but then you got scared and aimed low, is that it?

ANGEL CRUZ

Aimed low? I aimed for his damn ass and hit it. Mothahfuckah got an ass like a water buffalo, it ain't hard to locate!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

But you wanted to kill him —

ANGEL CRUZ

I wanted to shoot him in the fuckin' ass, lady! How many times I gotta say it?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Why?

ANGEL CRUZ

It was something I could do, ah-right?! These mothahfuckahs, like Reverend Kim, they run around, talkin' shit, talkin' "God," and they *steal people!* Steal mothahfuckahs right out from your face. And what can you do about it? Nothin'! You go to The Law, you know what the law do? The law do fuckin' nothin', that's what the law do! You try to go to a outside agency, make a complaint: "They stole my friend," you know who you talkin' to? You talkin' to the same mothahfuckahs who stole him in the first place! Juss like the, whaddyacallit, Scientologists and the Cult Awareness Network!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Scientologists?

ANGEL CRUZ

Read the fuckin' paper, lady! Scientologists sued the Cult Awareness Network, bankrupted them, and took over the damn Cult Awareness Network! Same office! Same phone number! But when you call the mothahfuckahs up, you speaking to one of them! Now what kinda help you think they gonna give you?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

So you went out, you got a gun —

ANGEL CRUZ

C'mon now! They didn't steal my friend *yesterday!* I didn't juss smoke a vile a crack, and bum-rush the show "guns a blazin'"!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

But you were high!

ANGEL CRUZ

Look, I seen a seventy-five-year-old grandmother from Astoria get sent to penitentiary for trying kidnap her grand-daughter from Reverend Kim's church! I kidnapped my friend Joey myself!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

When?

ANGEL CRUZ

Two months ago! Two years in the makin'! Surveillance, kidnappers, fuckin' deprogrammer — you know what that is, right?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I —

ANGEL CRUZ

Dass a expensive mothahfuckah: expensive and useless.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

It didn't work out.

ANGEL CRUZ

Deprogrammer said Joey had an unusually strong faith, some bullshit — didn't stop him from cashin' the check!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

And you did this all yourself?

ANGEL CRUZ

Nah, but, it's amazin' how people act. One day they all, like, "Yeah, bro', whatever ya need," next day it's, "Yo, fuck that niggah, B, got better things to do." People, they forget.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

But not you.

ANGEL CRUZ

Dass my friend! If someone's your friend, like, a real friend, how you supposed ta juss forget about him? You

got any friends, lady?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Mary Jane —

ANGEL CRUZ

You got any friends, "Mary Jane"? 'Cuz we got a friend, Eustace, he's doin' life in Arizona, but we stopped hangin' wit him when we was like eleven. And we got this other friend, Crazy Legs, he died a cancer at twenty-two, and dass hard, but at least he's dead! At least we could account for him, ya know? We'd go to the park, Grant's Tomb, smoke a joint, we'd save the last hit for Crazy Legs, put the roach to the side. But Joey? He juss gone. Bang: out! It'd be one thing if he was out for some good reason, like if he was an astronaut in space chasin' the cure for AIDS, but what he out for? He out for bullshit! He out 'cuz Reverend Kim sold him a straight-up lie —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

According to you —

ANGEL CRUZ

According to *me*?! Do you know what Reverend Kim say? He say he's the Son of God! I mean, how big does your fuckin' balls have to be to sit there with a straight face and claim some shit like that? Son a God? Yo, even if there was a Son of God — which, I mean, get real — but …

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You don't believe in God?

ANGEL CRUZ

Ah-right, I'm a put it like this: If there was "another" Son of God runnin' around here, juss pickin' up where his older brother left off, tryin' ta save our ass, He sure as shit ain't Reverend Kim! How many Sons of God you know drive a Lexus? Or got million-dollar stock portfolios? Or go skiing in Aspen? 'Cuz I'll tell you right now: If Jesus Christ existed, and I ain't sayin' he did, but if, by some miracle he actually did, the mothahfuckah didn't ski!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Not in Israel he didn't —

ANGEL CRUZ

Not in Israel, not nowhere! Swear ta God, I can't understan' why Joey don't see that! Dumb-ass mothahfuckah! It's so obvious, so clear, I mean, you wanna hear the fuckin', the know what I'm sayin'? — the, the irony? The irony is this: Me and Joey, we got, like, the telepathy. He always know what I'm thinkin' and vice versa the other way. I know what girl he like before he know it! He know what I'm gonna say, it ain't even come out my mouth yet! People think I'm crazy to have got involved in this shit the way I have, two years of my life and all that, maybe a lot more now, but, for real: If the situations was reversed, and it was me in that cult, no doubt in my mind Joey woulda done the same thing for me, only he prolly woulda did it better. He wouldn't a forgotten about me —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

How about now?

ANGEL CRUZ

"How 'bout now" what?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Where's your friend Joey now? You're in jail! Where's Joey?

ANGEL CRUZ

It's 'cuz a —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Because of what?!

ANGEL CRUZ

He … he captured!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

He's not captured, you're captured! You been here — what? — Three days?

ANGEL CRUZ

Maybe he don't know I'm here —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

What? He doesn't read the papers?

ANGEL CRUZ

I don't know what he reads —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Did it ever occur to you, Angel, that we, as individual people, are responsible for the individual choices that we make? And regardless of how close we may *think* we are to someone else, we have very little control over their choices, and absolutely zero responsibility for the consequences those choices bring on them?

ANGEL CRUZ

Zero?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

That's right, zero!

ANGEL CRUZ

Maybe for you —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

No! Not just for me, for everybody! If somebody joins some stupid cult, whether they're a good person or not, whether I love them or hate them, or think they're better than me, or think they've been manipulated, or abused, there's nothing I can do about it! Nothing! And it doesn't matter if that person is a total stranger or my sister; they aren't going to leave unless they want to, no matter what I think or feel!

ANGEL CRUZ

Dass bullshit —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

My father was still smoking cigarettes while he was in an oxygen tent! I begged him to quit all my life — did it stop him from killing himself?

ANGEL CRUZ

Maybe you shoulda tried harder!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Harder than what?

ANGEL CRUZ

Or maybe you didn't really give enough of a fuck to really try to help him!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Should I have gone to the chairman of Philip Morris and shot him in the ass? Would that have helped him?

ANGEL CRUZ

Maybe you should ax yourself that question!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

That's ridiculous.

ANGEL CRUZ

Is it? My friend Joey should be doing what you're doing! He should be a public defender, or a drug counselor, helpin' the people, fuckin' whatever! But where is he? He's out! Gone! And why? Why is he not here? Why? Do you believe that Reverend Kim is the actual Son of God? That a man deported from his *own* country and convicted of tax evasion in *this* one could even *speak* for God, let alone *be* God? That a man who *steals* people, has them selling flowers on the street, gettin' rich off them, what the fuck? Look me in my eye and tell me that a man like that should be allowed to do what he's doing! With a fuckin' government-approved tax-exempt status and a full police escort!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Angel —

ANGEL CRUZ

Where's my mother's full police escort when she gets off the subway from work after midnight and has to walk home

alone? Where's Mother Teresa's Lexus? And how 'bout you? You a public defender, and if you're any good at lawyering at all, you could prolly make a lot more money working someplace else, right? But you don't do that, do you? So where's your mansion? Where's *your* frappacino, swimming pool, mistress, Son-a-God fuckin' wonderland?! He stole my friend. I shot him in the ass. Now I'm fucked in jail, and he's eating banana cream pie in some plush hospital bed reading his *Wall Street Journal!* Juss like the chairman of Philip Morris! Your pops, he six feet under, fuckin' maggot food now, where's the chairman? I'll tell you where the fuckin' chairman is! Out there on the eighteenth green sippin' a Heineken, wiping the crumbs from his shrimp-salad sandwich off of his cashmere sweater, and he's smiling, unaffected. Or am I just being "ridiculous"?

(Pause)

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Everything you're telling me, Angel, it sounds like a real good motive to wanna murder somebody.

ANGEL CRUZ

My question to you was: Is it ridiculous? Guard!

Act 1, Scene 7

Scene 7

The yard, protective custody. A month later. Mary Jane speaks as Lucius Jenkins and Angel Cruz are being led into their cages.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I had to concede that what Angel was saying was *not* ridiculous. What *was* ridiculous was the fact that I regularly earned acquittals for hardened career criminals: crack dealers, arsonists, murderers even — people with jaw-dropping rap sheets — and then, six months later I'd be asking bail for the *same* guy for the *same* offense or *worse!* Angel wasn't a recidivist felon, he was a civilian. I believed I could get Angel an acquittal without having to put him on the stand. I believed

that the jury, if led, wouldn't convict Angel despite all the evidence. I could have plea-bargained Angel's case; that would have been easy, *routine* — most of those young district attorneys feared me because I was that rare public defender who could ruin them by taking an open-and-shut case to trial and win anyway 'cuz I am — I was — a goddamn excellent attorney! I wouldn't plea-bargain Angel's case because right after our second meeting, he went back upstairs and was assaulted by two other inmates — beaten and raped. I wouldn't plea-bargain Angel's case because three days later, when the Associated Press reported that Reverend Kim had been rushed back to surgery and that he had *died* on the operating table, Angel was found unconscious in his cell the next morning with a bedsheet tied around his neck. I wouldn't plea bargain Angel's case because after Angel spent the next seventy-two hours in a prison psych ward and before being transferred to a special twenty-three-hour lockdown wing of Protective Custody, I sat Angel down and informed him that the D˙A˙ had filed for first-degree felony murder and that the charge carried a mandatory

sentence of "Life without the Possibility." And Angel looked at me, and said, "Without the possibility of what?"

(VALDEZ *reenters, leading* ANGEL *to his cage.)*

VALDEZ

But if you *do* decide to fuck with me — *ever* — I will show you a world where mere misery is like toasting marshmallows 'round the campfire in your long johns. You get me there, Droopy Dog? Hey! You like to pout? Thass okay, you could pout. Don't pout too much, though. I might start feelin' bad and have to come in there and … pet you.

(To LUCIUS)

Superstar? Florida …

(VALDEZ *retires to his post upstage center.)*

LUCIUS JENKINS

Hey there, youngfella … I say, hey there, brother … What's your name? What's your name, man? Not up for conversatin'? Dass okay, I understand … Don't make much sense to stare at the ground like that, though. You oughta be enjoyin' this sun while you can feel it, brother. Don't come out but one hour a day for us up here. One hour … I take my hour too. Don't matter if it's snowin', rainin', fire and brimstone, nuclear attack, they gonna bring me out here! I'm a take my one hour, you could bet on that! I love me some sun. Love it! You know, they got a country over there in Europe gets almost no sun whatsoever? It's true. That's a bunch a pale Europeans drinkin' coffee over there, ain't no denyin' that. Feel bad for 'em. Takin' no sun's like drinkin' no milk, depletes a man. Not a good prescription for mental health, I'll tell ya that right now. Dass why you gotta take your one hour no matter what. Some men, they stop takin' their hour, next thing ya know — well … I take my hour, and you should too! Don't talk for a month, never talk again, but take your damn hour, enjoy whatever type a weather been provided … especially sun. Yes sir … 'specially the sunshine. Didn't useta feel that way 'bout the sunshine, back in the day … betcha didn't know dat. No sir … No way. Could ya juss tell me your name? Ya do speak the King's English, doncha, son? I don't know much Spanish 'cept; "Yo quiero uno eight-ball de Kokai-Yeno"! Useta say that all the time!

VALDEZ

You two ain't makin' love over there, are ya?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Mothah — See now, thass wrong! Wrong! Man tryin' ta vex me! Man tryin' ta … Damn!!

(Pause)

ANGEL CRUZ

Angel.

LUCIUS JENKINS

What's that?

ANGEL CRUZ

Angel.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Angel? I like that name. Thass a fine name. Say, Angel, would ya like a cigarette?

ANGEL CRUZ

Nah.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Nah?

ANGEL CRUZ

No thanks.

LUCIUS JENKINS

You're smart ta say no. Learnin' the ropes. But see, me, I don't want nuthin' in return for this cigarette, know what I'm sayin'? I'm not lookin' for a wifey. Don't close my eyes and pretend you're my Aunt Mary … C'mon, son, have a cigarette.

ANGEL CRUZ

Nah …

LUCIUS JENKINS

Now whaddya think? My dick's big enough to reach into your cage over there, wrestle ya to the ground, and insert itself up into ya? Hell, even Goliath wasn't hung that strong. We in lockdown, kid. No contact never … This is juss a friendly gesture, fact, it ain't even a friendly gesture, it's what ya might call "humanitarian aid." Smoke Lucky's?

ANGEL CRUZ

Nah.

LUCIUS JENKINS

They'll bring ya luck. Tell ya what I'm gonna do.

(LUCIUS *looks toward* VALDEZ.)

LUCIUS JENKINS

I'm a throw this here Lucky over to you with the matches. After ya light that Lucky, I'd appreciate it if you'd send the matches back my way. Okay? Here goes … There … Ya got it?

(ANGEL *looks toward* VALDEZ.)

ANGEL CRUZ

Nah … here.

(ANGEL *tosses cigarette and matches back to* LUCIUS.)

LUCIUS JENKINS

What'cha doin', youngblood? C'mon baby, take it easy … Easy … dass a gift, me to you, ain't nothing. No cause for alarm, no fire in the hole. Doan worry 'bout that fool over there, he eatin' Cheese Doodles. C'mon, this is simple like arithmetic, brother. Okay? Journey of a million miles, it commence itself on that first step. Oh, c'mon … it's a cigarette, amigo, not a engagement ring. Okay? Check out my "Hawthorne Wingo" now:

(LUCIUS *arcs a perfectly soft hook shot with the cigarette/matches. They land at* ANGEL's *feet.)*

LUCIUS JENKINS

Heaven sent, amigo, heaven sent.

(Pause)

ANGEL CRUZ

Thanks.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Thank you, brother, thank you. Could ya send over the matches, please? Merci … Taste good?

ANGEL CRUZ

Mmm.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Like ya knew that it would! Smokin's good for ya, doan let 'em tell ya otherwise: Lets a man stay humble. 'Cuz I figure, if a man successfully casts all his demons aside, he might get cocky, start thinkin' he's invincible, perfect, or somethin'. A man might start thinkin' he don't have ta depend on, well … on Higher Entities. Surgeon General is the general of what, anyway? He the general of the surgeons! Surgeons make money doin' them cancer operations! Sound like there's a little reverse psychology goin' on. Higher Entities, they doan bother wit the double-talk, they come correct, jack … yes they do. Say, look at that seagull! Nice, right? I ain't bothered to look at no wildlife in some time. Dass a nice flyin' bird. Nice sun too. Hey, this is all right, ain't it? Two gentlemen retirin' to the smokin' garden. No ice tea, but thass okay. I'm Lucius Jenkins, ya heard of me, right?

ANGEL CRUZ

The guard, he told me not ta —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Ya need ta forget about that guard, truss me. That man is troubled, still searchin' for hisself. You need ta remember one thing here, son: Us, you and me, we here 'cuz we have ta be. Got no choice in the matter. But that man over there, he doan haveta be here but he here anyway! Now what that say 'bout him? This is New York City, a man could work anywhere! Where he at? An doan tell me he raisin' a family, 'cuz I'll wager every cigarette, postage stamp, ramen noodle I got that man's single! I mean, look at him! Would you get up under him? Only time he get laid, he gotta go to the ATM.

VALDEZ

Eight minutes!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Man's a damn pleasure seeker. Our pain, dass his pleasure. Dass some Sodom-and-Gomorrah jazz right there. Man ain't nuthin' but a test a faith. Ignore him.

(Pause)

LUCIUS JENKINS

Say Angel … you ever heard that story concerning the mongoose and the black-eyed squirrel? See, there was this mongoose, okay? And this mongoose — this cat was smooth, right? Couldn't tell this mongoose nuthin' 'bout nuthin'. Brother had it all figured, okay? Till one day, he was out hunting for the venomous snakes, which, thass what mongoose do, they hunt all type a dangerous snakes — cobras, asps — so dig it: This brother's out on the hunt, right? when here comes this little black-eyed squirrel. And this squirrel, he was — how you say? — he had been ousted from his community, okay, shunned, on account of —

ANGEL CRUZ

I can't —

LUCIUS JENKINS

"Can't"? Can't what?

ANGEL CRUZ

I can't, I can't … sleep. I can't. In there, do you sleep?

LUCIUS JENKINS

I sleep.

ANGEL CRUZ

You breathe an' shit?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Mostly.

ANGEL CRUZ

How?

LUCIUS JENKINS

How? Dass a test a faith too.

ANGEL CRUZ

M-Man.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Hey.

ANGEL CRUZ

I … I ain't made for this —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Hey! Don't let that man see ya weak, brother.

ANGEL CRUZ

This is fucked.

LUCIUS JENKINS

C'mon now, son, pull it together.

ANGEL CRUZ

I … I can't —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Breathe! You can breathe out here, can't ya? Shoot, come on now. Breathe.

ANGEL CRUZ

Doan wanna —

LUCIUS JENKINS

No talkin', just breathin'! Everybody gonna make it juss fine, everybody gonna breathe and sleep. Ya breathin'?

ANGEL CRUZ

Yeah.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Keep doin' it then!

ANGEL CRUZ

I … I —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Have a cigarette, son, it'll help ya. Here, already lit, built for puffin'. Believe me, jack, you talkin' to a brother understands!

ANGEL CRUZ

Fuck.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Things can change, Angel. I changed. Like I said before — about the sun? — I love me some sun now, but I used ta hate the sun. Can ya imagine that? How's a man gonna live in Miami Beach, he don't like the sun? Shoulda moved somewhere else, I suppose, but thass a lot a work, a lot a planning. "Where should I go?" "What I'm goin' to do when I get

there?" "Do they sell cocaine in Alaska?" Stuff like that. Too much work. You still breathin'?
ANGEL CRUZ

Yeah.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Ok, so, lissen careful: there I was, Miami Beach. Paradise, right? Little apartment complex they got over there, second floor, view of the ocean, the ladies, everything … The ladies down there in Miami, Angel? Like nobody's business, brother — awesome, incredible … Rent was cheap — didn't pay but four hundred bucks a month on that little place. Did I mention it had a little terrace? Well, it did. Never went out on it. Cocaine in Miami? Plentiful, jack. Extremely plentiful. And cheap. Real cheap. Dirt cheap. For all intents and purposes, the shit was free. Pardon my language, but that's what cocaine is: Shit … horseshit … Anyway — Oh! And Quaaludes? Them little 714's? Like takin' aspirin, baby. Take two, call me late for dinner. Heroin, Dilaudid? Juss pick up the phone! Thirty minutes, home delivery! Hated the sun though, hated it. I'm not talkin' 'bout "Gee, I wish it wasn't so sunny," I'm talkin' hate. Pathological Dracula shit … Deep … Came a time, I stopped goin' in ta work if it was too sunny. Useta call in sick, order a pizza and a twelve-pack for $8.50, how ya gonna beat that?! Delivery boy, he was all right, little Equadarian kid, useta pick me up a little somethin' on the way, a nice bag, coupla pornos, whatever I wanted, useta blow a little smoke wit' him, he'd leave happy. Nice little system. One day, he stopped by … I killed him. Killed him with a cowboy boot. I mean, I was wearin' the boot at the time, thass how I killed him. After I killed him, I didn't know what ta do so I chopped him up, threw him in the Dumpster, right next door. Next door! Can ya imagine that? And ya know what happened? "Nuthin' … Not a damn thing. Kept waitin' for the sirens, they never came … So I called up the pizza shop, toal 'em; "I never got my pizza." You know what

they did? They sent me another one. For free. Now, to me that's a peculiar turn of events, doncha think? Unnatural … I'll tell ya why I killed him. I killed him 'cuz he left the door open, said the place stunk, needed some air. But when the air came in, the sun came with it. Now, I think … I think that was a very unusual thing for me to do, killing that boy, don't you? Highly unusual. And … nuthin' happened! Nuthin' … One day, I finally got up the gumption to leave Miami, but by then, I had killed five people. Five … killed three more up north, over here, but they was all white. Funny how people start payin' attention when white people start

droppin' … And all a this, 'cuz I hated the sun. My enemy. The sun … I had everything in the world down there but I didn't have nuthin'. Now I got nuthin' but I got everythin'. I love the sun now. Love it. Before? Hate. Now? Love. Dass a conundrum, Kemosabe. When ya get back to your cell? Doan lie down. When ya can't do nuthin' else except lie down? Then ya gonna lie down and dig on what I juss toal ya … reflect … Every hour, I'm a bang on my wall three times, let ya remember you ain't alone, okay?
ANGEL CRUZ

Yeah.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Hold up, today's Monday, right?

ANGEL CRUZ

Is it?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Yeah, don't drink the soup. You'll be up all night.

(VALDEZ *descends.)*

VALDEZ

Are there infractions goin' on over here?

LUCIUS JENKINS

No sir.

VALDEZ

That cigarette Droopy Dog's draggin' on, you give it to him?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Yes sir.

VALDEZ

That would be an infraction.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Aw c'mon, man.

VALDEZ

Did you just say something, Superstar?

LUCIUS JENKINS

How's a man supposed ta know it's a infraction to give another man a cigarette, when there ain't never was no other man here 'cept me till now?

VALDEZ

You didn't read the manual?

LUCIUS JENKINS

The manual?

VALDEZ

The manual states quite clearly —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Fuck your damn manual!

VALDEZ

Take a day off from the yard, both of you, so you can reflect on infractions.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Bullshit, mothahfuckah!

VALDEZ

Two days!

LUCIUS JENKINS

I'm gonna —

VALDEZ

A week! Perhaps your "Higher Entity" can sort this out for you. Cruz!

ANGEL CRUZ

I didn't say nuttin' —

VALDEZ

They releasing you.

ANGEL CRUZ

They are?

VALDEZ

Just kidding. Away from your cages, girls, let's go.

(Crossfade)

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

On the first day of Angel's trial, I was staring at a mountain of compelling evidence pointed squarely against my case. The D˙A˙ had so much evidence and so many eyewitnesses to work with, he knew he couldn't lose. Every piece of evidence he introduced, I found a way to cast the slimmest shadow of doubt. And his witnesses? They were all church members. I buried them one after the other. In court, I constantly had to suppress the urge to smile. On November eighteenth, the D˙A˙ invited me for dinner and drinks at Patsy's. I knew what was coming. He offered Angel this: Plead to manslaughter, he'd recommend the minimum sentence, Angel does eight years, everybody wins. I turned him down flat. He told me to talk it over with Angel, and get back to him in the morning. The next morning I told him: "Sorry, no deal." I never consulted Angel in the matter, never even mentioned it. I knew I had a win … I knew it.

Act 2

Act 2, Scene 1

ACT II: Scene 1

The yard, days later.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

When I turned down the D˙A˙'s offer of a deal that morning, I was not humble, and I did not suppress my smile. And then, I made a mistake: I overlooked a prosecution eyewitness

who was on the list to testify. He was a British Ph˙D˙ candidate doing his thesis on Living Religions who had been at the church that night. I had assumed he was some kinda bearded flake from the land of academia, but he wasn't. He was clean-cut, credible, and amazingly, had experience as a witness. He corroborated all the previous testimony of all the previous witnesses who I had previously discredited and I couldn't shake him up. In a moment of weakness, I went to the D˙A˙, looking for a deal, which of course, "Fuck you, bitch"! "Fuck you bitch" — well okay, fine — but that still didn't change the fact that Angel did not intend to cause Reverend Kim's death. This was not first-degree murder. The law may not have seen it that way, but the fact is the law is fallible. Angel had tried every means at his disposal to bring back his friend. And when everything failed, he still didn't give up. He made a foolish, perilous statement, but it was a statement. I find honor in that. I wanted to find honor in myself. And so I did. And it was right — Goddamnit, it was right.

(Crossfade)

LUCIUS JENKINS

(To ANGEL *)*

Long time no see, brother. How'd Cruel and Unusual Punishment treat ya?

VALDEZ

(From his post)

I heard that!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Wit' all due respect, Valdez, if it's a infraction to breathe God's air, juss tell us now and we'll asphyxiate ourselves.

ANGEL CRUZ

Yo, doan start no shit —

LUCIUS JENKINS

That man ain't nuttin' but a apparition!

(For VALDEZ)

An' we gonna conversate about whatever strikes our damn amusement, believe that! Maybe we gonna speak on the mating

habits of the Yella-Bellied Sap Suckah; maybe we'll conduct a symposium on some Butterscotch Puddin'!
ANGEL CRUZ

Yo bro —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Hey, Valdez! A˙C˙L˙U˙'s a fine institution, ain't it?

ANGEL CRUZ

A˙C˙L˙U˙?

LUCIUS JENKINS

(To ANGEL)

You think we back out here early 'cuz Ol' Valdez is tender-hearted?

(Miming being on the phone)

Hey, Valdez! My lawyer's on the phone, it's for you! Ha! Want me ta tell him you in the shower soapin' up your privates? Ah, what's a matter, brother: Constitution got your tongue? Ha!

(phone)

"Now what's that, Mr˙ Cooperstein? Yes, sir, I'll be sure to tell him. No, no, quite all right. You have a nice day too, Mr˙ C˙" Hey, Valdez! Mr˙ C˙ say to remind ya that we could talk about anything under the sun 'cept for conspiracy and treason, and if ya got a problem wit' dat, he say he got a cousin owns a Dairy Queen, could prolly get you a job flippin' burgers or sweepin' up.

VALDEZ

Fifty-four minutes!

LUCIUS JENKINS

God loves ya, Valdez, ya know that, right?! He loves ya and He gonna leave the light on for ya too, always

does! God love ya so much, even makes me wanna love ya, in fact, I do love ya! Angel love ya too, ain't that right, Angel?! We love ya 'cuz God love ya. And make no mistake, soldier, God, Jesus, Jehovah, Yahweh, the Holy Ghost, they L-O-V-E-Y-O-U. Praise be! Ha!

VALDEZ

Do you believe in God, Cruz?

ANGEL CRUZ

What?

VALDEZ

You heard me.

ANGEL CRUZ

I … uh — yo, this ain't got nuthin' to do wit' me.

LUCIUS JENKINS

It okay, son, tell the man.

ANGEL CRUZ

Look —

VALDEZ

It's a simple question, Droopy Dog.

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't fuckin' Droopy Dog!

VALDEZ

Then answer the question! Do you believe in God?

ANGEL CRUZ

Dass my business.

VALDEZ

It's funny. Some people, they got big balls when they're high on narcotics, brandishing weapons, killing a man, but take away the drugs and the guns, ask them a simple question, and what happens? They revert back to what they really are, ain't that right, Droopy Dog?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Someone need ta give you a hug, Valdez.

VALDEZ

If there's a God, Superstar, you ain't never gonna meet him! Very soon, Mr˙ Superstar, very soon, you gonna be Flyin' the Friendly Skies. All your lawyers, and your notoriety, and your delusions of grandeur, they all add up to zip. You are a defect of evolution like a three-legged dog, and when you get to Florida, they gonna put you down!

LUCIUS JENKINS

That makes ya happy, don't it?

VALDEZ

Happy? Why should I be happy? They gonna feed you lobster, strap you down, put you outta your misery. What's

happy about that? No. What makes me happy is lookin' at you right now and seeing the sheer terror in your eyes. Because that terror will haunt you *every day* until the State of Florida relieves it with a lethal injection! And that terror, along with whatever misery I can provide, is the only justice that the families of your victims are ever gonna get!
LUCIUS JENKINS

I'm a pray for you, man.

VALDEZ

Then pray. Me? I'm feeling a bit parched; I think I need a beverage. And being a free man, I think I'll run down to the staff cafeteria and choose from a wide assortment of refreshing drinks. Perhaps I'll purchase a Kit-Kat and a Bear Claw, something to tide me over, till I leave here and go eat whatever I want for dinner.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Hope you're monitoring your cholesterol —

VALDEZ

What?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Wouldn't want ya ta drop dead before you've been saved.

VALDEZ

"Saved"? I am a good man because I choose to be! End of story! Not because I fear God. Not because I wanna go to some Holy Playground when I kick the bucket! I go to work, I pay my taxes, I observe the law. I didn't kill eight people! I don't need to be "saved"! Do you really believe that there's a thing called God? Or is it that your pain is so unbearable that you force yourself to create a belief in order to medicate that pain? And if there is a God, Superstar, do you honestly believe that you are free from the burden of what you've done? And if there isn't a God, then what are you really? 'Cuz in a meaningless existence, your only function was to be a source of pain and death, like cancer or a plane crash! You renounced your humanity when you claimed your first victim! Now

what are you? I think you know, Superstar. I look at you, and I *know* that you know! And the most compassionate advice I can give you is this: When you get back to your cell, bang your head against the wall

until your brains spill out, only, please, do it after six so I don't have ta clean the shit up! Now I will be back … shortly!

(VALDEZ *exits.)*

ANGEL CRUZ

Yo, doan listen to that mothahfuckah, he don't know shit.

LUCIUS JENKINS

I know.

ANGEL CRUZ

Man's a fuckin' asshole.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Misguided.

(Pause)

ANGEL CRUZ

You think the sun's gonna come out before our time's up?

LUCIUS JENKINS

You don't believe in God, huh?

ANGEL CRUZ

I didn't say that.

LUCIUS JENKINS

God said to Peter: "Before this night is through, you gonna deny me three times. Peter say 'Not me, Lord, I could never deny you.' Then dawn came, the cock done crowed, and Peter had denied his Lord three times on the night a his arrest."

ANGEL CRUZ

I know that story —

LUCIUS JENKINS

When Jesus died on the cross, you know who was there wit' him? I ain't talkin' 'bout Roman soldiers and the blasphemin'

crowd, I'm talkin 'bout: who was there *for Him?* I'll tell ya who was there. His Mother, Mary Magdalen, coupla aunts, and some street walkin' ho's. All women. The twelve Apostles? Hiding in fear. His pops, St˙

Joseph? He was at the bar talkin' 'bout "Pour me another wine, Lazarus." It was the women showed up for Jesus. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, them cats had time ta make up for their sins, how much time I got? Thass why I'm a speak my mind! Thass why I ain't gonna let no mustachioed Roman soldier squelch my positive self-expression! Every day I got left, I'm a live free. I'm a open up that gift God give me each and every day, save me the wrappin' paper so's I could package up my gift and pass it on. Ain't gonna live in fear no more! I'm a show up for Jesus like he showed up for me!
ANGEL CRUZ

You want a cigarette, man?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Them things'll kill ya, brother. Now, how is it you ain't a believer?

ANGEL CRUZ

Look man, this ain't a conversation you wanna have with me.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Some of the greatest saints, they was nonbelievers, having the crisis of faith right up to the end.

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm not havin' a crisis.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Lemme pose to you a little hypothetical, brother: What if God existed?

ANGEL CRUZ

I really ain't up for this, bro.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Lemme juss kick it like this then, shortpants: If I were ta say to you, today, that God not only exists, but has a plan for

ya, brother, that you are here, right here and now, because God planned for this to be, truly, the first day of the rest of your life —
ANGEL CRUZ

Yo, man —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Hear me out: If I said that the life you will live from this day forward will be happy, joyous, and free, and with Divine Purpose —

ANGEL CRUZ

Juror number one, she likes me.

LUCIUS JENKINS

What?

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm sayin': In my trial, I think that juror number one likes me.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Yeah, well, so long as jurors number two through twelve like you too, then you got no problem, but in the meantime —

ANGEL CRUZ

Nah, man, I mean, she *likes* me.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Yeah, so what?

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm juss' sayin' she likes me, what's wrong wit' dat?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Don't you take no disputatious attitude on me —

ANGEL CRUZ

What's wrong with juror number one wanting to get with me?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Get with you? Well, hey now, Casanova, that's very special, I'm happy for ya, but I'm a tell you right now, either

you got your signals crossed or that female is emotionally disturbed —
ANGEL CRUZ

'Cuz she likes me?

LUCIUS JENKINS

What kinda churchgoin' woman gonna make goo-goo eyes at some criminal defendant?

ANGEL CRUZ

Why she gotta be a "churchgoin' woman"? Why can't she juss be a woman, like, she's a woman and I'm a man?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Oh, you think you a man, huh?

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm juss sayin' she likes me.

LUCIUS JENKINS

I bet she's fat.

ANGEL CRUZ

She ain't fat, man.

LUCIUS JENKINS

You seen her standing up? I rest my case.

ANGEL CRUZ

Yo, juss 'cuz you ain't got no woman —

LUCIUS JENKINS

I gotta woman! And she's called The Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and she's a source of comfort and understanding, a solace in a sea of turpitude!

ANGEL CRUZ

Yeah well, juror number one ain't fat.

LUCIUS JENKINS

She go to Jenny Craig, believe that! I seen 'em all!

ANGEL CRUZ

Whatchu seen lately to be the judge a anything?

LUCIUS JENKINS

I see a fool standin' before me, tell ya that for free. I see all I need to see. Don't ya get my dander up now, son. Don't you

danderize me! And don't you never change the subject on me again when I'm pursuin' a line of thought like I was subsequent to your pointless little interruption. Talkin' about girls? Shoot. You see any girls here?
ANGEL CRUZ

I'm juss sayin' —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Say! Say! Say! What I'm sayin' is, if you horny, go in the corner and whack your pee-pee, juss leave me out of it.

ANGEL CRUZ

And I'm sayin' I ain't interested in any conversation about God.

LUCIUS JENKINS

You don't like God?

ANGEL CRUZ

I didn't say that.

LUCIUS JENKINS

I'm not saying that you did. I'm asking you a question, a direct question: Do you like God?

ANGEL CRUZ

I don't know God, okay? You know him, or you think you know him —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Think I know him?

ANGEL CRUZ

Whatever, you know him —

LUCIUS JENKINS

No, no, no, son. It's not "whatever." Either I know him or I don't. What do you think? Do I know him?

ANGEL CRUZ

I don't know —

LUCIUS JENKINS

"Don't know"? Don't try to jive me with "I don't know." Of course you know! You juss too feeble-hearted and trifling

to lissen to what you already know to be true in your damaged heart! I look like a fool to you?
ANGEL CRUZ

It ain't like that, man —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Or maybe you juss think I'm insane, "Black Plague," "Boogie Man," "Boo Mothahfuckah! Comin' to eat you up!" That it? You think I'm some kinda cancerous plane crash?

ANGEL CRUZ

You're cool, man, you're cool —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Cool? You lucky they got a cage between us, talkin' 'bout "cool"! Be anything you wanna be in this life, son, be a damn atheist, arsonist, lowlife, heretic, Antichrist, politician, cable TV installer, any kinda general miscreant tickles your T-bone, but doncha ever be cool! And doncha ever try to tell me that I'm cool, 'cuz I juss won't stand for it! Be blazin' or be freezin', but doncha ever be cool! Cool? Shit! That's juss a waste of my time, and I care about my damn time! Do you hear me? I said, do you hear me?

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm … I'm sorry —

LUCIUS JENKINS

I didn't ask you were you sorry. I take one look at you and I can tell you frankly, you one of the sorriest people I ever seen. I asked you, do you hear me?

ANGEL CRUZ

I hear you.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Do you *hear* me?

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't the fuckin' enemy, man.

LUCIUS JENKINS

You need to inspect yourself, so you can respect yourself, little man!

ANGEL CRUZ

You know what? Why don'tchu just inspect your fuckin' self, mothahfuckah.

LUCIUS JENKINS

You need ta get straight wit' the Lord, pancho.

ANGEL CRUZ

You straight with the Lord, Lucius?

LUCIUS JENKINS

August 4th, 1996, I was out there at night, dark night, black. Before I knew it, the sky filled wit' light, some kinda meteor shower, eclipse, somethin' out a nowhere I felt God! No rational explanation 'cept I felt Him. Felt his Light. Powerful light! And on my knees, I begged His mercy and forgiveness! And the funny thing is, I had felt it before, that feeling. A few times. But I never attributed it ta God. I always thought, when it happened, it's the smack, or the cocaine, some kinda deja-who — wasn't none of that! God had touched me, but I juss thought it was the wind … God forgives me for what I done, and he'll forgive you too if ya ask him.

ANGEL CRUZ

You ain't straight wit' shit.

LUCIUS JENKINS

And you know that how?

ANGEL CRUZ

Doan make me fuckin' hurt you, man.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Hurt me? How a little Chihuahua like you gonna harm me?

ANGEL CRUZ

You could call me fuckin' names, talk down to me like I'm some fuckin' schoolkid, it don't change the facts!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Curse, curse, curse! Chirp! Chirp! Chirp! That's what you is — a little dumb sparrow, chirpin' in the wind!

ANGEL CRUZ

Valdez was right about you.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Chirp, chirp, chirp —

ANGEL CRUZ

You killed eight people, man. You a damn psychopath! A fuckin' nut job talkin' 'bout God, talkin' 'bout Kingdom of Heaven; you can talk shit all you want, say your prayers twenty-four hours a day, it don't mean shit!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Doan mean shit, huh?

ANGEL CRUZ

Dass right.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Prayer doan mean shit?

ANGEL CRUZ

You deaf, mothahfuckah, thass what I said!

LUCIUS JENKINS

If prayer doan mean shit, then how come I was awoken the other night to hear a sorry little bitch stutterin'

over some prayer in between chokes 'n' sobs 'n' snorts from inhaling the little puddle a tears on his damp little prison pillow? If prayer doan mean shit, then what the fuck were you doing Tuesday last? Or Monday? Or lass Saturday after lunch for that matter? 'Cuz I don't think it was Valdez I heard, and you the onlyest mothahfuckah up in here besides me. So, do prayer mean shit, or don't it? You tell me …

ANGEL CRUZ

It's a habit, dass all.

LUCIUS JENKINS

That ain't no habit. Cocaine, dass a habit! What you was doin' was somethin' else … Know what I think? I think you need to stand up right now and open your heart to Jesus. That pain and anguish and sadness inside ya, it ain't leavin' by its own volition. It got a nice home inside a you rent-free! Why the fuck it gonna leave without being kicked out? It's time to serve them mothahfuckahs their eviction papers, Angel! It's time to liberate the profound and genteel man that is you.

This prison, these cages, they ain't shit, brother! Inside my heart and my mind, I am sailing on the Pacific on a fine schooner basking in the light of life. You ever been to the Pacific Ocean? It's real nice, Angel —
ANGEL CRUZ

Dat ship you floatin' on, it ain't made a nothin', Lucius.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Ain't sprung a leak in nearly two years, day I found God, right where you standin'.

ANGEL CRUZ

And you don't think that's juss a little bit convenient?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Oh, it's convenient!! Who tryin' ta say it ain't convenient?

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm talkin' 'bout findin' God in prison.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Anyplace where you can have your life resurrected, thass a damn convenient place.

ANGEL CRUZ

After you killed eight people —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Thass between me and God.

ANGEL CRUZ

And thass very convenient too!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Well God juss happens to be a very damn convenient individual, brother! I coulda had God when I was six, sixteen, thirty-two, thirty-five, he wasn't goin' nowhere! It happens I didn't get him till I was forty-two; a suicidal, multiple homicidal drug addict starin' down at Death Row! Would I have preferred to find him at twenty-five? Hell yeah! But I didn't! Now why's everyone wanna turn and blame God for that?

ANGEL CRUZ

Ain't no one blamin' God here. You killed those people, not God.

LUCIUS JENKINS

I ain't never said I didn't.

ANGEL CRUZ

I doan wanna talk about this!!

LUCIUS JENKINS

What'd you do to get in here anyway?

ANGEL CRUZ

Dass my business.

LUCIUS JENKINS

I know what you did. I seen it on the TV. You killed a man.

ANGEL CRUZ

I didn't kill him!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Now how's that?

ANGEL CRUZ

Worry 'bout your own shit!

LUCIUS JENKINS

You killed him.

ANGEL CRUZ

No I didn't!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Man's dead, ain't he?

ANGEL CRUZ

I juss shot him in the ass.

LUCIUS JENKINS

And then what happened?

ANGEL CRUZ

Fuck you mean, "Then what happened"? He fell down, screamin' like a little bitch, they grabbed me —

LUCIUS JENKINS

What happened to *him?*

ANGEL CRUZ

He went to the hospital —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Then what happened?

ANGEL CRUZ

They made a operation on his ass, he was fine —

LUCIUS JENKINS

"Fine"?

ANGEL CRUZ

I juss shot him in the fuckin' ass!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Then how'd he end up dead, jack?

ANGEL CRUZ

Doctors! Fuckin' medical malpractice! Shit, what's so fuckin' hard 'bout takin' a bullet out a mothahfuckah's ass? Ya take a knife, a fuckin' scalpel, whatever, ya open the ass, ya find the shit. What's the "complication" 'bout that? "Complication"? Juss open up the ass, whatever's not ass, take the shit out! How's it my fault some drunk mothahfuckah can't tell the difference between a bullet and a man's ass?!

LUCIUS JENKINS

So the doctor was drunk?

ANGEL CRUZ

Prolly! You know how them mothahfuckahs be!

LUCIUS JENKINS

So, how'd the man die then?

ANGEL CRUZ

Like I said, "complication"! First doctor — mo-fuckin' Dr˙ Dolittle — he obviously ain't did the job right, they had ta bring the mothahfuckah back, put him on the operatin' table, "simple procedure," but the mothahfuckah dies!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Die from what?

ANGEL CRUZ

Heart attack! How the fuck? I mean, this mothahfuckah, Reverend Kim, he say he the Son a God! How's a real Son a God gonna let himself go out like that?! 'Cuz if I was God, and I sent my son down here to do a job, and he came back talkin' 'bout "Yeah, Pop, they shot my ass, and, my heart, it juss couldn't take it," I'd slap the mothahfuckah upside his

head! I'd tell him, "You better look in the mirror kid; now I gotta send your sister down to do a man's job!" Mothahfuckah oughta be ashamed of himself! They hung Jesus from a cross! Banged nails into his feet and hands —

LUCIUS JENKINS

But you ain't shot Jesus' ass, did ya?

ANGEL CRUZ

Hell no!

LUCIUS JENKINS

You shot a man.

ANGEL CRUZ

And I'd do it again.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Not the Son a God, a man. Man died.

ANGEL CRUZ

And dass my fault?!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Did you shoot a man?

ANGEL CRUZ

Get the fuck out my face.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Did he die?

ANGEL CRUZ

Not 'cuz a me!

LUCIUS JENKINS

If ya didn't shoot him, would he be dead now?

ANGEL CRUZ

You killed eight people, mothahfuckah! Who you talkin' to?!

LUCIUS JENKINS

You shot a man. The man died. Ain't no man no more.

ANGEL CRUZ

But —

LUCIUS JENKINS

But what? Dead is dead, son. I know you know that.

ANGEL CRUZ

It's not my fault.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Meaning what?

ANGEL CRUZ

Meaning it ain't my fuckin' fault!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Now that's juss plain illogical. That's like me tellin' you dat a hippopotamus knows how ta fry himself some eggs.

ANGEL CRUZ

That man deserved to die.

LUCIUS JENKINS

No human man deserves ta die!

ANGEL CRUZ

Why, 'cuz "God" say so?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Dass right.

ANGEL CRUZ

When exactly did "God" say that shit?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Bible say —

ANGEL CRUZ

Fuck the Bible! Bible ain't no autobiography, man! "God" didn't write the shit! Buncha mothahfuckahs wrote that shit. Apostles didn't write no Gospel, and Jesus, that mothahfuckah never wrote one damn word! Not even a fuckin' postcard! Dass a fact! Ain't my fault the man died, but he dead now, so what? He juss one man outta a billion, people die every day.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Ain't murdered every day.

ANGEL CRUZ

Nah, they gotta run into *you* first to earn dat distinction.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Or you!

ANGEL CRUZ

I did somethin' had to be done!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Then accept it! You man enough to do it, then be man enough ta stand behind it! But you can't really stand behind it, 'cuz you know it's wrong! You know it!

ANGEL CRUZ

Do you know it's wrong ta kill a man?

LUCIUS JENKINS

'Course I do.

ANGEL CRUZ

Then why you got lawyers fightin' extradition for you?

LUCIUS JENKINS

I'm gonna do life here in New York State anyway! I pled guilty. I took responsibility! Why I gotta go to a place where they tryin' to kill me?

ANGEL CRUZ

I thought you was straight wit' God, man?

LUCIUS JENKINS

I am.

ANGEL CRUZ

If you straight, then why you gotta fear death, mothahfuckah? Alls you gotta do is die, then you gonna be in Heaven wit' "God," right? Ain't that the ultimate goal? If that shit is true like you say, then what's the fuckin' problem then? God forgives you, right? You juss stood there in my face an' toal me that shit. So what's the dilly, yo? You try to tell me you floatin' on the Pacific wit' your sailor cap on?! Dass bullshit! You don't act like no inner-peace mothahfuckah I ever met! You act angry and crazy.

LUCIUS JENKINS

I'm in prison, jack!

ANGEL CRUZ

You killed eight people yo, your ass *should* be in prison! Tell me: "Be a man"! Why doan you be a man, go die like ya supposed to? You gots the God Insurance, what else you need?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Ain't got no more time ta waste on imbeciles —

ANGEL CRUZ

You afraid ta die 'cuz your ass know only two things gonna happen when you do die: Either nuthin', or somethin' bad! Ain't no God, ain't no light!

(VALDEZ *enters.)*

VALDEZ

Peanut chew?

ANGEL CRUZ

Take me outta here, Valdez!

VALDEZ

Away from the cage, convict.

(VALDEZ *enters cage, cuffs* ANGEL)

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't no convict!

VALDEZ

Not yet.

ANGEL CRUZ

Not yet, not ever!

VALDEZ

Dat ain't what I hear.

ANGEL CRUZ

Never!

VALDEZ

Spittin' in the wind, son!

ANGEL CRUZ

Rather spit in it than lissen to it!

LUCIUS JENKINS

"You could cast out the devil, but ya can't cast out God"!

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't got God and neither do you.

LUCIUS JENKINS

I'm a perfect child a God and so are you. He got a plan for us all! Valdez too!

ANGEL CRUZ

Hurry up and *die,* mothahfuckah!

VALDEZ

You know what, Droopy Dog? I'm beginning to like you.

Act 2, Scene 2

Scene 2

Visitations Area: Rikers Island. Two days later.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

"God's fucking Plan"?

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm juss sayin' —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Saying what? That God's plan is you should spend the rest of your life in prison? What kinda plan is that?! It's the District Attorney's plan, Angel, that's whose plan it is, not God's! What is wrong with you?

ANGEL CRUZ

I didn't say I believed the shit.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Well, hey — how very skeptical of you!

ANGEL CRUZ

I think Lucius was juss —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

"Lucius"? What, you're on a first-name basis now?

ANGEL CRUZ

I see the mothahfuckah every day. He the only one I got up there —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Oh, well then, by all means, mingle! Mingle with the deranged psychotic serial killer!

ANGEL CRUZ

See, he ain't really like that —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

What?

ANGEL CRUZ

I know —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Do you have any idea who Lucius Jenkins is?

ANGEL CRUZ

I know, he killed eight people, right?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Eight that we know of!

ANGEL CRUZ

He told me eight.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

He told you eight? What does that mean?! "Case closed, Lucius told Angel eight"? And what, eight's not enough for you?

ANGEL CRUZ

I hear you, all right. Let's juss get back ta business.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Maybe Lucius should be your lawyer!

ANGEL CRUZ

Yo, I was juss makin' conversation!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

When you're acquitted, Angel, when we're sitting in a bar together drinking beer and eating chicken wings, *then* make conversation! Unless you wanna just have a conversation now, exchange recipes, talk philosophy, forget the whole thing!

ANGEL CRUZ

You tryin' ta back out now?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Are you?

ANGEL CRUZ

Yo, I'm here, Mary Jane.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I am putting my career on the line for you, Angel, my vocation! So you better be damn sure your head's screwed

back on before I even think about putting you on that witness stand and suborning perjury!
ANGEL CRUZ

I'm down wit' the program and I'm gonna thank you till my dyin' day, believe me.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I could lose my license! They could toss me in jail!

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm already in jail and I'm gonna get out any way I can, swear ta God!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

D˙A˙ asks you a question, what do you do?

ANGEL CRUZ

Pause five seconds.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Then what?

ANGEL CRUZ

Answer the shit.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Answer how?

ANGEL CRUZ

"Yes," "No," or "I don't know."

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

And then what?

ANGEL CRUZ

Stop.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Stop what?

ANGEL CRUZ

Stop talking.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Why?

ANGEL CRUZ

'Cuz I might say some shit I shouldn't say.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

What if it needs to be said?

ANGEL CRUZ

I don't know —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Do you wanna spend the rest of your life in prison?!

ANGEL CRUZ

Whadda you think?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I don't know, Angel! What should I think?

ANGEL CRUZ

I wanna get the fuck outta here.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

God won't have a problem with that?

ANGEL CRUZ

Ask fuckin' God.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I'm asking you.

ANGEL CRUZ

Fuck God! He ain't got nuthin' to do wit' this.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

How do you know that?

ANGEL CRUZ

I don't know —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I can't work with "I don't know"! If I'm gonna put you on the stand and risk my job, then I need to know that you know!

ANGEL CRUZ

I know.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

No you don't.

ANGEL CRUZ

I do know, really, truss me —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

It's not about trust —

ANGEL CRUZ

Aaight, look: that mothahfuckah Reverend Kim, he was a false prophet, fuckin' heretic, cashed in on God's name, fucked up not just Joey, but a lot a fuckin' people, right? God should understand why I brought the mothahfuckah down, and if he don't, then … fuck him! I'm juss a ordinary man, I ain't no martyr, and if that's God's plan for me, then you know what? Fuck the damn plan! And thass how I know, all right?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You gotta problem with lying?

ANGEL CRUZ

I love to lie, tell me what to say.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Tell me a lie.

ANGEL CRUZ

About what?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Anything. Lie. Right now.

ANGEL CRUZ

Ah-aight … I invented electricity.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Stop messing around!

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't messin' around. I invented the shit!

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Do you know how electricity works?

ANGEL CRUZ

Not exactly.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Then that's a dumb lie! Tell me a smart lie.

ANGEL CRUZ

Like what?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

My father drank Jameson's.

ANGEL CRUZ

Dass a lie?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

He drank Bushmills. But it's a smart lie because my father was a first-generation Irish Catholic who supported the I˙R˙A˙, and Bushmills is known as a Protestant whiskey because it comes from the North. So it would be logical to assume that he wouldn't be caught dead drinking a Protestant whiskey, even though he did. That's a lie built on truth. That's why it's a good lie. Because it's true. Now tell me a true lie, Angel.

ANGEL CRUZ

Ah-aight … I tried ta kill Reverend Kim that night.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

What?

ANGEL CRUZ

I mean, it's a lie 'cuz I didn't try ta kill him, but it's true 'cuz …

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Because what?

ANGEL CRUZ

It's true 'cuz … 'cuz it kinda makes sense that I might have wanted to, right?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I'm the D˙A˙, you're you: "Did you shoot Reverend Kim?"

ANGEL CRUZ

No.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Look me in the eye when you say it. "Did you shoot him?"

ANGEL CRUZ

No.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You're lying!

ANGEL CRUZ

Whaddya want me to do, say yes?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

I want you to believe what you're saying.

ANGEL CRUZ

But it ain't true.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Make it true! "Did you shoot him?"

ANGEL CRUZ

No.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Why can you say that?

ANGEL CRUZ

I don't know.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Think about it.

ANGEL CRUZ

'Cuz … I ain't like that?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Why not?

ANGEL CRUZ

It ain't in me.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Why not?

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm not, you know —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

No I don't. You're not what?

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm like, guns scare me.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Guns scare everyone.

ANGEL CRUZ

Nah, I mean, like, holding one.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Why's that?

ANGEL CRUZ

'Cuz a somethin' that happened once —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

So it would make sense to you that you would never hold a gun again?

ANGEL CRUZ

Yeah.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Okay. "Did you bring a gun to the church that night?"

ANGEL CRUZ

Nah.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Say no.

ANGEL CRUZ

No.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Good. Now why would it make sense to you that you wouldn't shoot Reverend Kim?

ANGEL CRUZ

'Cuz it's wrong?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

What's wrong?

ANGEL CRUZ

Shootin' someone.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Fair enough. "Did you shoot Reverend Kim?"

ANGEL CRUZ

No.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

"You shot him, didn't you?"

ANGEL CRUZ

No.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

"Did you ever think about hurting Reverend Kim?"

ANGEL CRUZ

No.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Say yes to that.

ANGEL CRUZ

Why?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Because you only have to lie twice: when he asks you if you had a gun on you, and when he asks you if you shot Kim. Everything else, tell the truth.

ANGEL CRUZ

It won't make me look bad?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

It will make you look truthful. The jury wants to acquit you, Angel. They just need to hear you say sincerely and believably that you didn't do it, and they will clear you.

ANGEL CRUZ

And they could do that?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

It's called jury annulment. Even if it was totally obvious that you did it, the jury can refuse to convict, and that's it. End of story.

ANGEL CRUZ

And no one can say shit?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

No one.

ANGEL CRUZ

Even though it's wrong?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

You think what you did is wrong?

ANGEL CRUZ

You mean, technically?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Last month you didn't think you did anything wrong!

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't sayin' it's wrong, but, technically, the truth is: I shot him, right? Technically, thass kinda wrong, isn't it?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

What are you saying, Angel?

ANGEL CRUZ

I mean, what do you think about it?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

It doesn't matter what I think.

ANGEL CRUZ

What if I said that it mattered to me?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Do you wanna stop the trial, plead guilty?

ANGEL CRUZ

I wanna know what you think.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Our jury, Angel, they want to acquit you because it's right, not because it's wrong. They don't think you deserve "Life" or anything close to it. No one blames you for Reverend Kim's death except the State of New York! And what is that? It's an institution! It's a set of rules set up to apply to each and every circumstance, as if they're all the same. They are not all the same. The jury knows that. And they will clear you of all charges, from murder on down, because they understand what happened here beyond the "technicalities" and they empathize. Not because of your dazzling smile, but because, under the same circumstances as you, they might have done the same damn thing themselves. You made a statement, Angel. And they are going to back that statement up. Your testimony will supply reasonable doubt. And that's all they want. And that's what I think. Make sense?

ANGEL CRUZ

Huh?

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Does it make sense to you?

ANGEL CRUZ

Oh … Yeah … Yeah.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Are you sure?

ANGEL CRUZ

I was juss —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Just what?

ANGEL CRUZ

Thinking.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

About what?

ANGEL CRUZ

Joey.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Oh.

ANGEL CRUZ

We useta, me and Joey, we useta sneak out our house on Sunday nights, jump the turnstiles. And we would hop down onto the subway tracks, walk through the tunnels, lookin' for shit, makin' adventures, playin' like we was G˙I˙ Joes … Pick up a empty can a Hawaiian Punch or some ol' beer bottle for fake walkie-talkies, and we'd have our snow boots on so we could be astronauts. And we would pretend we were the last two survivors on earth and that we came from the future … stupid … the future … like in that *Planet of the Apes* movie with the two guys? Only we had no weapons, juss chocolate milk. And we'd get so lost in our games and our discoveries and our made-up stories … so many stories: lookin' for ghosts, lookin' for apes, lookin' for fortunes, runnin' from rats, talkin' 'bout girls, talkin' 'bout Thelma from *Good Times,* talkin' 'bout daydreams, talkin' 'bout Bruce Lee versus Evel Knievel, talkin' in words that wasn't even words … and … and it would always surprise us when we saw the lights … even though we could feel the train coming, but it was the lights. The closer those lights came, rumble of the tracks, sound a the conductor's horn blarin' at us, we'd get so excited we'd freeze — two seconds of freezin' cold … hypnotized … holdin' hands, waitin', waitin', then: *Bang!* We'd jump off the rails, hug the wall, climb back up the platform, start runnin'

— runnin' — tearin' ass clear across town back to Riverside or Cherry Park. One time … one particular time, when we was holdin' hands right before we jumped off the rails, somethin' happened, and we couldn't let go, couldn't untangle ourself from each other, and we were inside that light, and … we both saw skeletons and radiation, and we was paralyzed in a way that I juss can't explain, till somethin' blew us apart, juss blew us, and we landed safe. We didn't move for a long time. We was cryin', and Joey ripped his brother's coat … We wasn't speakin' till we got to our block and Joey said that it was the light that ripped us apart and saved our lives … Joey said, "Jesus hopped the A train to see us safe to bed."

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Do you believe that?

ANGEL CRUZ

We was juss kids.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Yeah … Well, you're on an A train right now, Angel, and if there's a Jesus on board it's me.

ANGEL CRUZ

I know.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

D˙A˙ asks you a question?

ANGEL CRUZ

Pause five seconds.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

And then?

ANGEL CRUZ

Answer it.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

How?

ANGEL CRUZ

"Yes," "No," "I don't know."

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

And then?

ANGEL CRUZ

Stop talking.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Because?

ANGEL CRUZ

He gonna try ta fuck me up.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

If you want to explain something?

ANGEL CRUZ

You'll ask me in the redirect.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Did you bring a gun to the church?

ANGEL CRUZ

No.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Did you shoot Reverend Kim?

ANGEL CRUZ

No.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Did you ever want to hurt him?

ANGEL CRUZ

Yes.

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

What's God's plan for you?

ANGEL CRUZ

Chicken wings and beer.

Act 2, Scene 3

Scene 3

Charlie D'Amico speaks.

CHARLIE D'AMICO

Lucius Jenkins was executed by the state of Florida on June third … Me and the wife, Mary, we took a plane down to Tallahassee to be there for Lou since he didn't really have nobody except a sister in East St˙ Louis who couldn't attend because of somethin' or other. I didn't get to talk to Lou or nothin', we were just permitted to witness the death … It was quick. The thing that freaked me out the most was they

had this clock on the wall in the room where Lucius was. It was hangin' right above the hospital gurney and it said "Standard" on it, juss like the clocks we had at Rikers. I kept starin' at that clock and at the little red hand goin' around marking the minutes and the big black hand clickin' them off. I felt like I could hear it clickin' through the Plexiglas. I kept thinkin' how I'd stare at that same clock at work wanting it to move faster, and now here I was in Florida wishin' it could move slower or just stop. I hated that clock mostly 'cuz I felt it was fuckin' redundant … When they brought Lou in, he was silent. He didn't ever say nuthin', which surprised me. The only thing he said was: They asked him if he had a final statement to make and he said, "No, sir." He only looked out at us once. He looked right at me and I tried ta smile but it was like he didn't recognize me, and for like a split second I was pissed; I was thinkin', "This trip cost us like a thousand bucks, at least he could acknowledge our fuckin' presence, ya know?" It's crazy, but that's really what I thought. My wife, Mary, had just the right expression on her face though, and she cried real real quietly, so as not to upset the families or take away from the thing that was happenin' right in front of us … I tried real hard to figure out what he was feelin' or thinkin', but it was real hard to tell from lookin' at him. It almost looked as if he wasn't feelin' nuthin'; and I thought I knew him too well to believe that that could really be the case, but … I was wrong. It turns out Lucius must of found himself another Oreo cookie man, 'cuz when the coroner did a toxicology on him, they found substantial traces of heroin and cocaine in the bloodstream. Lucius died high as a kite. When it was over, me and Mary went to this diner across the street from our motel that advertised itself as having "Tallahassee's Finest Southern Fried Chicken." We ordered two plates, and when the waitress

brought it over, we got all excited 'cuz it looked so big and juicy and plump, but when I stuck my fork into this big plump fried chicken, it deflated like a balloon.

We got the check, went back to the motel, ordered a pizza from Domino's, called my sister-in-law so we could talk to the kids. When we got off the phone, Mary kissed me — like she really meant it. I kissed her back, and we went to bed and made love for the first time in six months. When the pizza guy came, we pretended we weren't there … I could tell you that Lucius Jenkins helped me stop drinkin', 'cuz he did, that he convinced me to look into startin' a pool-cleaning business wit' my brother-in-law, which we also did, and that he got me fired off my job which turned out to be a huge blessin' in disguise; and that stuff is all important and true, but really, I only knew the guy for three months, which ain't a lot, and if someone were ta say that he just used me or whatever, that he was a lunatic, I prolly couldn't argue back much. Ask me about drinkin' and jails, I'll tell ya a lot. Ask me about pool cleanin', I'll take my chances against anybody. Ask me about Lucius Jenkins, there ain't a hell of a lot I can say 'cuz there ain't a hell of a lot I know. All I really know about Lucius Jenkins is that I liked him.

Act 2, Scene 4

Scene 4

The yard, midstream.

ANGEL CRUZ

Yo, why ya gotta be a little bitch for? C'mon, man! Lucius … Yo, Lucius … You stupid, man. You actin' like — you know who you actin' like? You actin' like a little fuckin' kid! Silent treatment … Thass baby shit! I had a friend, he useta do the same shit. He be mad at me, he wouldn't say nuthin', juss be silent like a mummy. You a mummy, man? Mofuckin' King Tut? Stupid, man … Tryin' ta punish me? Ain't I punished enough already? Aaight, fuck you too! I ain't never talkin' to you again, ever, dass it! Ain't nuttin' interesting 'bout you anyway! You boring!

(Pause)

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm leavin' here soon anyway. Coupla more days, you ain't never gonna see this face again! Never! Gonna get some chicken wings and beer! Dat shit gonna taste good too! Ice cold beer, gonna burn my throat on the way down, mofuckin' Heineken! Nice flamin' hot wing — gonna dip dat shit in the bleu cheese, shit gonna be the shit! Gonna go to the bar: fuckin' Cuba Libre! Gonna get my lawyer drunk, make love in the bathroom standin' up! Gonna bring juror number one too, mofuckin' orgy!! Gonna leave the bathroom, tell the waitress, Cuba Libres everywhere! *Libre,* Mothahfuckah!! Whatchu think 'bout dat?!

(Pause)

ANGEL CRUZ

Whatever I wanna do, I'm a double do dat shit! You like movies? I ain't talkin' 'bout no Charlton Heston Moses bullshit, I'm talkin' 'bout mothahfuckin' real movies! I'm a go to a spot, pick up a big-ass bag a some proper smoke, roll the most gigantic El you ever fuckin' seen, blaze that shit up till it's ash, and go see every fuckin' movie out there! Tom Cruise, Al Pacino, Jackie Chan: I'm a see all dat! I'm a get a popcorn so big, that shit gonna look like a two-story building! I'm a get a Coca-Cola — that shit gonna be refreshing!

VALDEZ

Eight minutes!

ANGEL CRUZ

Ain't never gonna hear that voice again neither! I'm a be Honolulu, Hawaii, doin' the dog paddle! I'm a be back ta school, meet my wife — Love at First Sight — buy a carpet and a toaster! I'm a do all a that! You say sumpthin', man? Whatchu said? Even if you ain't said nuttin', I know you thinkin' some shit! Thinkin' some stupid shit … Whatchu thinkin'? I *know* what you thinkin'. C'mon, say it. C'mon, mothahfuckah, talk! Yo, whatsamatter, you afraid you ain't

got nuthin' ta say? Afraid I'll knock your nonsense right out the fuckin' park?! Whatchu gotta say?!

(Pause)

ANGEL CRUZ

Fine! Be like that!

(Pause)

LUCIUS JENKINS

Smell like rain.

ANGEL CRUZ

What?

LUCIUS JENKINS

I say, it smell like rain.

VALDEZ

Seven minutes!

ANGEL CRUZ

(To VALDEZ)

It ain't been no fifty-three minutes, Valdez!

LUCIUS JENKINS

He ain't talkin' 'bout how much time you got. He talkin' 'bout how long I got before they escort my ass to the van downstairs.

ANGEL CRUZ

You goin' ta court?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Florida.

ANGEL CRUZ

Florida? Today?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Why? Was you plannin' ta bake me a cake?

ANGEL CRUZ

Yo … nah, juss, you know … I'm juss sayin' …

LUCIUS JENKINS

Sayin' what? "Sorry"? People don't appreciate no human life! I'm tryin' ta stay alive, make a contribution, everybody outraged: "How dare he wanna live!" Now, I'm a go die; you think it's gonna make one bit a difference? People still gonna be pissed off: "Why he got a bed?" "Why can't we torture him more?" "Why he eatin' a damn cheeseburger?" Fuck 'em.

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm … You can't appeal dat shit?

LUCIUS JENKINS

I accept God's will.

ANGEL CRUZ

But what if dat ain't God's will?

LUCIUS JENKINS

A lesser man might raise dat question.

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't lesser.

VALDEZ

Six minutes!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Nah, you perfect. You gonna go home, smoke a joint, everything gonna be okeydokey.

ANGEL CRUZ

Dass right.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Wake up in the mornin', eatin' your Fruity Pebbles, talkin' 'bout "Gee, Mommy! What a scary dream I had."

ANGEL CRUZ

Doan see why not —

LUCIUS JENKINS

"I didn't *really* kill no man." "I don't *really* have ta take no responsibility." "God gonna work out a special payment plan for me."

ANGEL CRUZ

Yup.

LUCIUS JENKINS

See, I wasn't aware God took the damn Discover card! But I guess if you're "Angel Cruz," well, it's just different, huh? Everybody else pay cash, but "Angel"? He juss walk right out the store and God'll juss put it on his tab, ain't that right?

ANGEL CRUZ

You juss jealous I'm gettin' out —

LUCIUS JENKINS

What I got ta be jealous for? You got Beelzebub doin' your thinkin' for ya; meanwhile I got the Voice a God sounding sweetly in my ear tellin' me, "Ya done good, Lucius, now come on home."

ANGEL CRUZ

"Ya done good"? Lucius, what the fuck "good" you ever done ta make God say some bullshit like that?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Why doan you ask Him yourself if you're so innerested?

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm askin' you.

LUCIUS JENKINS

And I'm tellin' you: I ain't no long-distance phone operator! You gotta question for The Man, you need ta dial direct, jack!

ANGEL CRUZ

What's so "good" 'bout killin' eight people?!

LUCIUS JENKINS

"Eight people," "Eight people," dass all anyone ever wanna say!

ANGEL CRUZ

Dass 'cuz —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Y'all love ta get all up in Lucius business, doncha? Makes y'all feel cozy and safe! "Lucius killed eight people, he bad! We ain't killed no eight people, we must be good"! Shoot, dass some humorous knee-slapper y'all perpetratin' on yourselves — and dass my word right there!

VALDEZ

Five minutes!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Every night, kid, every night, without fail, on the cement ground, knees bruised, ligaments twitchin' an tortin', neck achin', I prayed for you. Asked God, "Make Angel *who he is,* not how he actin'." I cried.

ANGEL CRUZ

Yeah, well —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Somethin' wrong wit' dat?

ANGEL CRUZ

You could do whatchu want —

LUCIUS JENKINS

That ain't what I asked ya —

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm sayin' —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Son: me prayin' for ya, is there somethin' wrong wit' dat?

ANGEL CRUZ

It ain't wrong —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Is it "bad"?!

ANGEL CRUZ

I didn't say that —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Is it "bad"?!

ANGEL CRUZ

Nah.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Is it "good"?

ANGEL CRUZ

Dat don't mean —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Don't mean, don't mean! Did it ever occur to you once … *ever* in all these days 'n' nights we spent together: Did it ever occur to you, Angel, ever, ever … to pray for me?

(Pause)

VALDEZ

Four minutes!

(Pause)

LUCIUS JENKINS

See? Dass what I thought …

ANGEL CRUZ

Lucius —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Doncha "Lucius" me now! Shoulda "Lucius"-ed me then!

ANGEL CRUZ

God don't hear me.

LUCIUS JENKINS

God hear you and you hear God! You doan like what he sayin', dass the real story!

ANGEL CRUZ

I don't know what He's sayin'!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Get on your knees right now, ask the Lord's forgiveness, I dare ya!

ANGEL CRUZ

Yo —

LUCIUS JENKINS

Do it!

ANGEL CRUZ

And then what? I get on my knees; "Forgive me, forgive me, forgive me"; and then what?!

LUCIUS JENKINS

You know what!

ANGEL CRUZ

Ain't gonna change nuttin'!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Coward!

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't no coward!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Then prove it!

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't gots ta prove shit.

LUCIUS JENKINS

God say —

ANGEL CRUZ

You don't know nuthin' 'bout God —

LUCIUS JENKINS

I know everything about God! It's people like you, cryin' in the darkness, waitin' on the lightning, meanwhile you got the flashlight in your own damn lap; you're the ones don't know shit about God! God say, "Come to Me and Be Free"! How much more red carpet rollin' y'all need?! People wait on faith like it's some kinda gift!

Ain't nuttin' like that! Faith is like a little blade a grass, fights it way through the concrete tryin' a get his-self a little drink a water! Faith ain't no Puerto Rican Finger Puppet waggin' my head like a fool! I am my own man! I am a Soldier of Christ, and the light a God shines on me and in me in perpetuity, jack!

ANGEL CRUZ

You killed eight people —

LUCIUS JENKINS

So what I killed eight people? They juss people!

ANGEL CRUZ

What?!

LUCIUS JENKINS

If God didn't mean for them people to be killed, how would I have the ability to kill them?

ANGEL CRUZ

Them people never did nothin' wrong.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Never said they did.

ANGEL CRUZ

You did that shit on your own.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Yes I did.

ANGEL CRUZ

Not God, you.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Dass right.

ANGEL CRUZ

Your own free will.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Hold up now! Was it my free will to be molested and sodomized, abused and violated from the age a five? Was it my free will to turn ta drugs and alcohol as a result a that shit? Was it my free will to be a undiagnosed manic-depressive paranoid schizophrenic?! Nah, people doan wanna hear 'bout none a that! All people wanna do is cry for the victims! What about my victimization?

ANGEL CRUZ

That ain't —

LUCIUS JENKINS

They put some faggot-ass rock star on VH-1 talkin' 'bout his battle wit' addiction, everybody cry! Some movie actress, she got incested once or twice, she so "brave" to come forward! But me? I'm juss a Black Plague! Ain't no "disease a addiction" for me, it's "free will." Ain't no "brave comin' forward" for Lucius, it's Florida and Death fuckin' Row!

ANGEL CRUZ

You crazy, man —

VALDEZ

Three minutes!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Jesus' last words was "Forgive them, Father, they know not what they do." Now I'm tryin' ta take the Jesus perspective on this whole deal, forgive the people, but it's hard. Everybody act like they down wit' God, but didn't God say killing's wrong?

ANGEL CRUZ

Killing's wrong for everyone else, but it's okay for you?

LUCIUS JENKINS

I killed a little boy, chopped his pee-pee off and fed it to him. Beat him to death with his own baseball bat, he was screamin', "Mommy, Mommy." It didn't feel wrong. It felt good!

ANGEL CRUZ

That's 'cuz you fucked in the head, man!

LUCIUS JENKINS

If that's true, then, what's your excuse?

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't makin' excuses —

LUCIUS JENKINS

How'd it feel when you killed that Reverend Kim? Was it good for you too?

ANGEL CRUZ

How you gonna enjoy killin' a little kid and think God could ever wanna shine a light on you?

VALDEZ

Two minutes!

LUCIUS JENKINS

God loves me.

ANGEL CRUZ

He loves you more than he loves an innocent boy?

LUCIUS JENKINS

Do God love you more than he loved dat Reverend Kim? Huh? Answer my damn question!

ANGEL CRUZ

Maybe he does —

LUCIUS JENKINS

"Maybe"? "Maybe"? That ain't no answer! Mothahfuckah, get up on that witness stand tomorrow, tell the judge, *"maybe'* I shot that Reverend — see what he gonna tell ya! Maybe Time is over, this is Grown Man Time right here! You shot and killed an unarmed, defenseless sixty-five-year-old man. Period. The End. You know it, I know it, God know it! *And,* you did it in a church! You could dance the Lambada 'round it all night, string a forest full a Christmas trees with all the "maybe's" you could pull out your turned-out, lyin' ass — and it will never be different from how I just said it! Shit!

(To God)

Try ta offer a dyin' fool in the desert a drink a water, Lord, and all he could say is "maybe"!

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm goin' home, Lucius — home — and I'm gonna have my life, ya fuckin' lunatic!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Bitch, you *are* home! And the life you have is miserable and worthless and done! And I'm a tell you somethin' else: Proud! Hateful! Selfish! False! Cowardly! Slippery! Vengeful! Weak willed! Without remorse! Neither fish nor fowl: *Evil* — mothahfuckah —

ANGEL CRUZ

Thass … Nah! Fuck dat! Nah!

LUCIUS JENKINS

The Evil took ya, Angel — took ya so good, you don't even know you gone!

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't gone nowhere!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Oh, you gone, all right. Gone! Bon voyage, Baby Capone — enjoy the chicken wings!

ANGEL CRUZ

You don't know me! You don't know nuthin'!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Okay.

ANGEL CRUZ

You don't know my heart! I'm *all* heart!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Was.

ANGEL CRUZ

All your words! All your bullshit! All this time! All this time, I thought you maybe knew sumpthin' —

LUCIUS JENKINS

I know you killed a man.

ANGEL CRUZ

Yeah! Yeah, dass right! Yeah! I killed a man. *One* man!

LUCIUS JENKINS

One's better than eight?

ANGEL CRUZ

It's different.

LUCIUS JENKINS

How?

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't like you!

LUCIUS JENKINS

You juss like me!

ANGEL CRUZ

I know who I am! I'm good!

LUCIUS JENKINS

You ain't good!

ANGEL CRUZ

Mothahfuckah, I don't feed little children their dicks, then say it felt good! I don't say shooting the Reverend Kim felt good! I know what I did! I know how I feel —

LUCIUS JENKINS

I "know" how the Reverend Kim "feels" — motherfucker feels dead!

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm goin' home!

LUCIUS JENKINS

You ain't nuthin' but a pigeon-hearted little bitch — thass your nature, thass your character, thass who you are!

ANGEL CRUZ

You don't know me!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Yeah, you might be lookin' at me, but you talkin' 'bout your own self, ain'tcha?!

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't, I won't, wouldn't …

LUCIUS JENKINS

"Won't, wouldn't" what? What?

ANGEL CRUZ

(To VALDEZ)

Valdez!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Valdez can't save ya!

ANGEL CRUZ

(To VALDEZ)

Valdez, take me outta here!

LUCIUS JENKINS

You ain't no man! You ain't shit, you don't stand for shit, and your life is a wasteful embarrassment!

ANGEL CRUZ

Valdez!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Oldest juvenile delinquent I ever seen! Still squirt dog water, doncha?

ANGEL CRUZ

Fuck you.

LUCIUS JENKINS

Got no vocabulary neither! Unrepentant no-class sinner!

ANGEL CRUZ

Yo, Valdez!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Run back ta the darkness, ya blind bat!

ANGEL CRUZ

I ain't nuthin' like you!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Proud, proud, proud!

ANGEL CRUZ

Never was, never will be!

LUCIUS JENKINS

Chirp Chirp Chirp!

ANGEL CRUZ

Valdez!

VALDEZ

One minute!

ANGEL CRUZ

C'mon, Valdez!

VALDEZ

One minute!

ANGEL CRUZ

Valdez! Please!

VALDEZ

One minute!

Act 2, Scene 5

Scene 5

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

When I used to be a lawyer, I would wake up cranky as hell every morning at five a˙m˙ and I would fantasize about sleeping in, calling in sick, having a "me" day. I was resentful about the demands of the job, the lack of recognition, the lack of a life, the fact that it was "hard." Once I got disbarred, I suddenly had all the time in the world, and I didn't want it … I didn't want it at all. Angel's redirect had been masterfully constructed, and he was masterful. He was wiping away tears, looking the jury right in the eye, and most of all, he looked and sounded completely sympathetic and believable. I got emotional. I tried not to show it, but it just spilled out. I was proud of him. I was prouder of myself. And why not? It was my defining moment and … I held on to it a split second too long. Angel started sobbing, and I was vaguely thinking, "Okay, get him off the stand," but before I could react,

because the truth is I really was getting off on how emotionally involved the jury was getting over all this, before I knew what was happening, Angel started talking. He told the judge not to blame me, that I was just trying to help. I tried to cut him off; I said, "No more questions," but Angel kept on talking …
ANGEL CRUZ

"Hail Mary —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

And talking …

ANGEL CRUZ

"Hail Mary —

MARY JANE HANRAHAN

Angel will be eligible for parole in 2038 …

ANGEL CRUZ

"Hail Mary, you're a lady, talk to your fuckin' Son." I doan, I doan mean that … I juss … I juss wanna be good … I wanna be, I wanna be a good man, Mary, I wanna be a man … Saint Anthony? Saint Anthony! "Saint Anthony, Saint Anthony, please come around, somethin' is lost and … I juss … it's 'cuz … I stole John Hameric's jacket, God. I know you know that, but I stole it, and I didn't mean it, even though I did mean it 'cuz I was jealous that he had that jacket and I didn't — and he cried and cried, and I threw that shit in the Hudson and I never toal him 'cuz I blamed Sidney Betincourt and then Sidney Betincourt kicked John's ass and I never said shit and I am so fuckin' sorry! I am so fuckin' sorry, God, and please, do somethin' good for

John Hameric wherever he is, make somethin' good happen to him, please, let him hit the number or find some money or get a new jacket, God! Somethin! Make him have a good life 'cuz he loved that fuckin' jacket, God, that fuckin stupid Spiderman jacket. I can't believe … I wish … I'm so sorry. I am.

(VALDEZ *enters*)

VALDEZ

Cruz!

ANGEL CRUZ

I am so sorry, I am so so sorry —

VALDEZ

Let's go, Cruz.

ANGEL CRUZ

I *am* a man, God! I am a man that is sorry.

VALDEZ

Cruz!

ANGEL CRUZ

I am a man and I am so, so sorry.

VALDEZ

Cruz! Time!

ANGEL CRUZ

Really, God, I'm … I … Valdez … Valdez, I'm sorry —

VALDEZ

Step away from the cage.

ANGEL CRUZ

I'm, I'm sorry, ya know, Valdez. Valdez, I'm sorry.

VALDEZ

Quite all right.

ANGEL CRUZ

I —

VALDEZ

Yes … yes … away from the cage.

(ANGEL *assumes the position.* VALDEZ *enters, cuffs* ANGEL, *and leads him out of his cage.)*

(End of play)